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A VIRGINIA GENTLEMAN

*and* HIS FAMILY

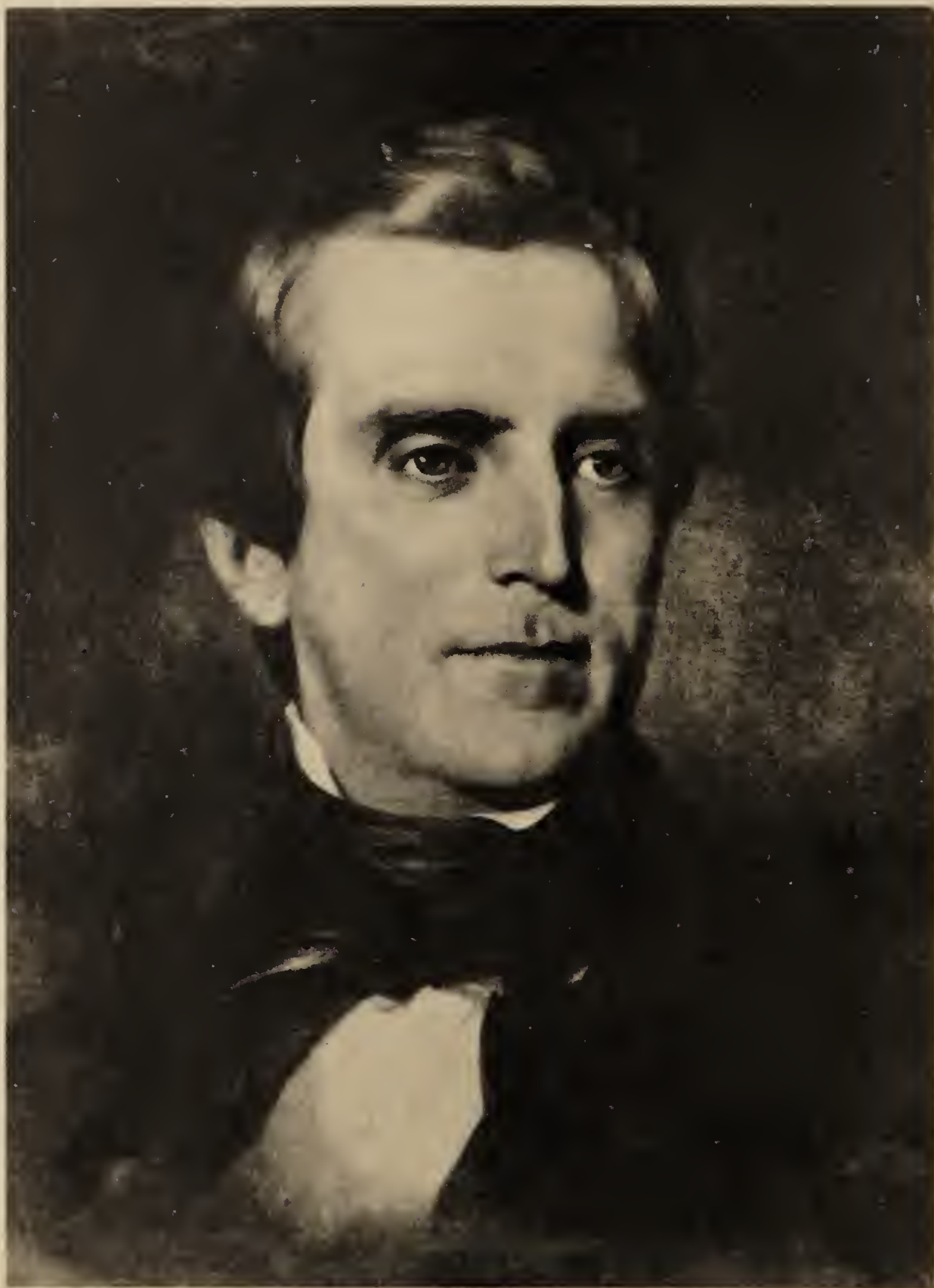
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MONCURE ROBINSON

From the portrait by Thomas Sully  
In the possession of Beverley R. Robinson, Esq.



A  
VIRGINIA  
GENTLEMAN  
*and*  
HIS FAMILY

BY  
NATHALIE ROBINSON BOYER



*PHILADELPHIA*  
Printed for the Author  
MCMXXXIX

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TO  
MY SONS  
Philip *and* Francis





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CHAPTER I

THE PARENTS

The  
*Moncure Robinson*  
Family





# CHAPTER I

## THE PARENTS



### The *Moncure Robinson* Family

ON my father's side, my grandparents were John Robinson of Virginia and his wife, Agnes Conway Moncure. The ancient family of Moncure—the name derived from *mon coeur*—came originally from France, and in the early part of the sixteenth century fled as refugees to Scotland. The ruins of the castle of Moncur are still to be seen there in the Parish of Inchtute in Perthshire, and the estate now belongs to The Baron Kinnaird, a descendant of the family of Moncur in Scotland.

THE founder of the family in America, and grandfather of Agnes Conway Moncure, was the Reverend John Moncure, who came to Virginia in 1733 and later was the rector of old Acquia Church. The following description of the church was written by

Robert A. Lancaster, Jr., in his *Historic Virginia Homes and Churches*:

Over the south door of the old Acquia Church, in Overwharton Parish, Stafford County, is this inscription: "Built A.D. 1751. Destroyed by fire 1751 and rebuilt A.D. 1757 by Mourning Richards, Undertaker. William Copein, Mason." It may be well to remind the reader, especially in view of the Christian name of Mr. Richards, that undertaker in those days meant contractor.

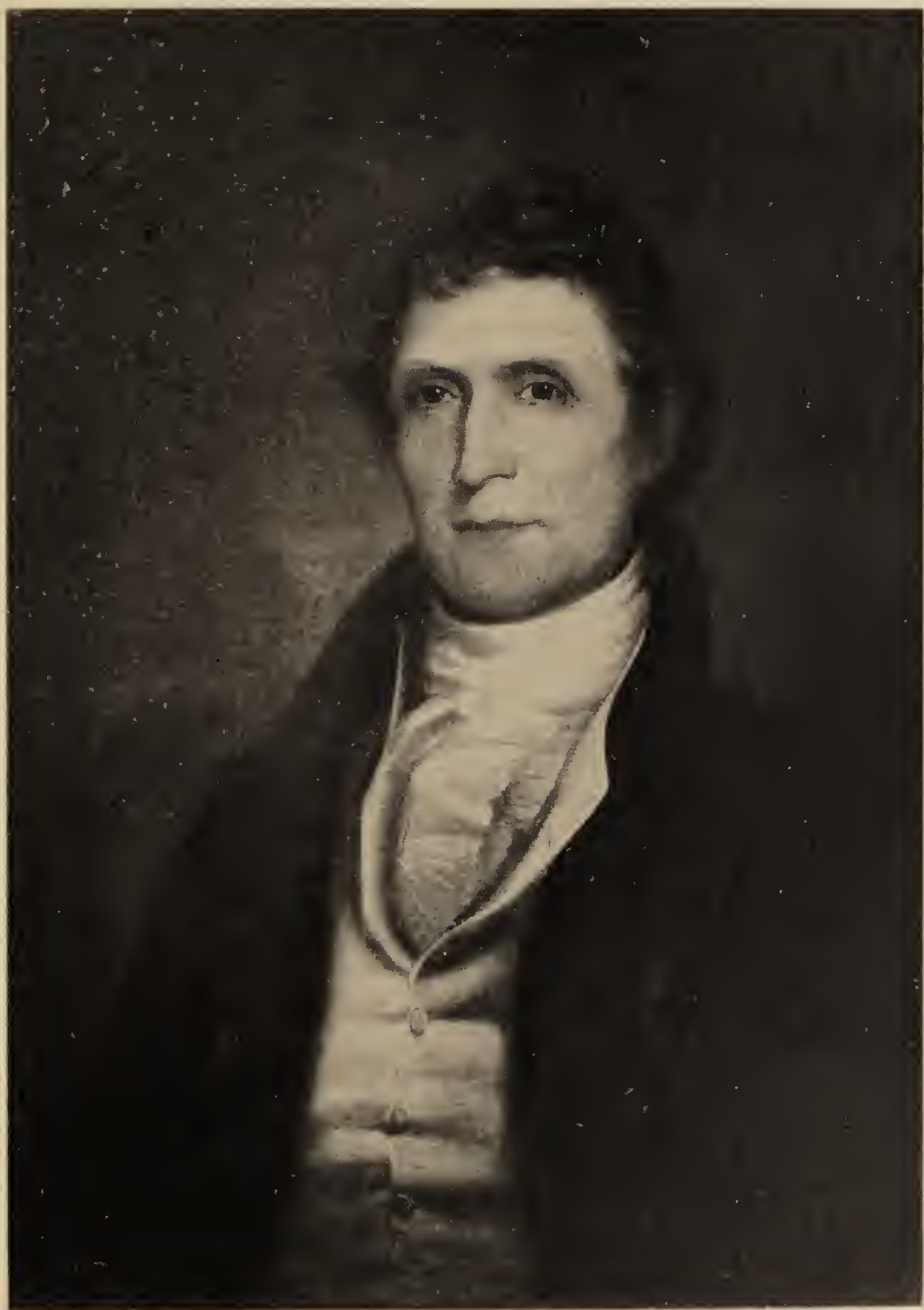
Overwharton Parish goes back to a much earlier date than that upon the church, but earlier houses of worship in it were probably of wood, and all traces of them have passed away. . . .

Acquia Church was built during the rectorship of the Reverend John Moncure (1709/10-1764), who was buried in the chancel, and whose descendants are still among the staunchest supporters of the parish. Under the Communion table is a marble slab upon which are the words "In memory of the Race of the House of Moncure."

Acquia is one of the most beautiful and best preserved examples of Colonial church architecture in America. It is cross-shaped, with thick walls of checkered brickwork, sloping roof and square tower for clock and bell . . . it stands to-day in perfect repair and unchanged by fancy or fashion. The stone-paved aisles, the lofty, "three decker" pulpit, with its overhanging sounding board, and the square pews are all there. In the chancel are four tablets upon which are inscribed the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, and the Ten Commandments.

This beautiful little church is still kept in repair through a small legacy left by my father for this purpose.

THE following is a letter from Mr. George Mason of Gunston, Fairfax County, Virginia, written to John Moncure's widow, shortly after his death:



JOHN ROBINSON

From a portrait

In the possession of the Misses Cameron





GUNSTON, 12TH MARCH 1764.

DEAR MADAM,—

I have your letter by Peter yesterday, and the day before I had one from Mr. Scott who sent up Gustin Brown on purpose with it. I entirely agree with Mr. Scott in preferring a funeral sermon at Acquia Church without any invitation to the house. Mr. Moncure's character and general acquaintance will draw together much company, besides a great part of his parishioners, and I am sure you are not in a condition to bear such a scene; and it would be very inconvenient for a number of people to come so far from church in the afternoon after the sermon. As Mr. Moncure did not desire to be buried in any particular place, and as it is usual to bury clergymen in their own churches, I think the corpse being deposited in the church where he so long preached is both decent and proper, and it is probable, could he have chosen himself, he would have preferred it. Mr. Scott writes to me that it is intended Mr. Green shall preach the funeral sermon on the 20th of this month, if fair; if not, the next fair day; and I shall write to Mr. Green tomorrow to that purpose, and inform him that you expect Mrs. Green and him at your house on the day before; and if God grants me strength sufficient either to ride on horseback or in a chair, I will certainly attend to pay the last duty to the memory of my friend; but I am really so weak at present that I can't walk without crutches and very little with them.

I am, with my wife's kindest respects and my own, dear madam, your most affectionate kinsman,

GEORGE MASON.

JOHN MONCURE's granddaughter, Agnes Conway Moncure, married my grandfather, John Robinson, in 1801. They lived at Poplar Vale, on the outskirts of Richmond. Later, when my father was obliged to sell their home to the city, it was with the understand-

ing that the small Robinson graveyard on the place should not be disturbed, and there it now is in the park of the City of Richmond where my grandparents and many of their sons and daughters are buried.

My grandfather was a lawyer and Clerk of the Circuit Court of Richmond for forty-one years, and Henry Clay, in his youth, was a deputy clerk in the office. In 1812, grandfather went into co-partnership with his wife's brother, William Moncure and Frederick Pleasants, who more than a century and a half ago were engaged in extensive foreign and South American trade.

My grandparents had thirteen children. Besides Moncure, my father, there was an Edwin, a Moore, a Conway, an Octavia, and other sons and daughters whose names I have forgotten, if I ever knew them. There was also, I remember, an Anna Jane, who in my mother's opinion was peculiar and difficult. Whenever her daughters became impossible, which was quite often, she would say, "You are just like your Aunt Anna Jane," and that was a horrible rebuke.

FROM their Sully portraits, John Robinson, in his high stock seems a mild, gentle person, but his wife, Agnes Moncure, in her muslin cap, looks a determined and able woman. Mother, I think, stood in much awe of her and told me that when she visited her mother-in-law in Richmond with her older children she always dreaded it, for Grandmother con-





AGNES MONCURE ROBINSON  
From the portrait by Thomas Sully  
In the possession of Mrs. J. Randolph Robinson



sidered a young child's digestion could stand anything, and would give them many indigestible things to eat. Mother, anxious, would wait until Grandmother disappeared, and then hastily take away the unwholesome dainty. Grandmother Robinson was a great economist, and once, by mistake, made her ginger-snaps with pepper instead of ginger. So as not to waste them she bribed the children with two of ginger for every one of pepper they ate.

My father, the eldest son, was born in Richmond, Virginia, on February 2nd, 1802. He was six feet in height; of slight build, with well shaped head, deep set gray-blue eyes, and thick, fair hair; a firm determined face, but with much sweetness in his smile. As I remember him, he was a beautiful, white-haired, old man, very distinguished and intellectual looking, with most courtly manners—as polite to a servant as to the highest in the land. When quite young, owing to the financial difficulties of his father, he did much towards educating and bringing up his many brothers and sisters. He was always most generous to them and to all others who needed his assistance.

WHEN six years old his education began at the Gerardine Academy in Richmond under the leadership of M. Gerardine, a French gentleman of high literary attainments. At the age of thirteen he entered William and Mary College, in Williamsburg, which is, with the exception of Harvard, the oldest university in this country. Shortly after entering, he was



threatened with expulsion for his political views, but notwithstanding, he was graduated at the age of sixteen with the degree of Master of Arts, the youngest in his class. At seventy years of age, he read Latin fluently and was an excellent French scholar. Well versed in French and English literature; Shakespeare and Byron were his favorite authors. He read the Bible frequently, said grace at table, and had family prayers every morning before breakfast. He went to church each Sunday morning and expected his children to go with him. He had most devoted friends—they to him and he to them.

IN 1818, when but sixteen years old, though his father wished him to study law, he decided to become a civil engineer, and as a volunteer joined a party appointed to make a topographical survey of the State of Virginia, from Richmond to the Ohio River. In spite of his youth he rendered most valuable assistance, preparing important reports on the coal fields of what is now West Virginia. A year later, he made an independent expedition into the northwestern part of the State, and in 1821, paid a professional visit to the Erie Canal. The result of this investigation made him a strong advocate for the construction of railroads instead of canals.

IN 1823, Father went abroad and spent two or three years in the study of the railroads in France, England, Wales and Holland. In England, he became well acquainted with George Stephenson, then building

the Liverpool and Manchester Railroad, and with other engineers of England, France and Russia, among them M. Michel Chevalier of France.

ON this first visit to England, he had the pleasure and privilege of staying at Holland House with Lord Holland and his brilliant wife, meeting many of the agreeable people of those early days; among them Sydney Smith, whose wit and humor delighted him, and the Irish poet Moore; but best of all was Lord Byron, the one whom he admired not only as a charming gentleman but also to his thinking, the greatest English poet of that day, whose poems he read constantly. A painting of Newstead Abbey, Byron's home, hung on the walls of his library in Philadelphia. The poems, bound in red leather, were also there in a bookcase; but, alas, under lock and key. He felt, much pleasure as they gave to him, they were not fit reading for his children—though Byron's gallant fighting for Greece he impressed on their minds, and his poem "Maid of Athens," he repeated often and was delighted with the child who could repeat the verses to him.

WHILE in Paris in 1825, my father and Mr. George Peabody of Boston, with some other Americans, gave a dinner to Lafayette, who had just returned from his last visit to this country. That dinner must have proved the beginning of a friendship with the Lafayette family, for in after years, when any of its

members visited the United States they always stopped at my father's house.

MR. PEABODY was the great-uncle of the Reverend Endicott Peabody, who has been for over fifty years the distinguished and inspiring headmaster of Groton School. His daughter, Ellen, married Mr. William C. Endicott, a Judge of the Supreme Court of Massachusetts and Secretary of War in Cleveland's first cabinet. In turn their daughter married Joseph Chamberlain, the brilliant and forceful member of the House of Commons for so many years.

SOME sixty years later, Mr. Peabody, hearing that my father was spending the summer at Newport, asked that on his way home he come with his family and lunch at Nahant. The invitation was accepted, and the meeting of these two handsome old men, who had not seen each other since they had been lads in Paris, was a very charming event.

ON his return to the United States, my father constructed in 1829 under Stephen Girard, the Pottsville and Danville Railroad, one of the first railroads built in this country; also a railroad along the little Schuylkill River Valley in Pennsylvania to develop the Tamaqua coal fields. In 1830, he began the construction of the Richmond and Petersburg, the Richmond and Fredericksburg, and other railroads of the South. Four years later, he undertook the construction of the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad, which has



been considered the crowning achievement of his professional career; the work that is indelibly stamped for all time with the genius of its first engineer, who gave to it, in that early day of railroads, his clear foresight of the ultimate proportions of the immense special traffic for which he designed it. In 1836, he went to London to secure a loan for the completion of this road, which he accomplished successfully through the banking firm of Gowen and Marx, after whom, in acknowledgment of their financial aid in placing the loans, he named the first engine especially adapted for the coal-carrying trade. This engine was manufactured, under his direction, by the firm of Eastwick and Harrison of Philadelphia.

IN 1840, the Czar of Russia, Nicholas I, sent commissioners to visit the locomotive works of the United States, and instructed them to bring an offer from His Majesty to my father, hoping to procure his services as engineer for the great system of railroads the Czar was about to inaugurate in the Russian empire. Not wishing to absent himself so long from his country and his family, my father refused the offer, but introduced the commission to the firm of Eastwick and Harrison. This resulted in their engagement and ultimate contract, so that they shortly afterward transferred their business to Russia.

IN 1926, thirty-five years after Moncure Robinson's death, Mr. Samuel Rea, retired President of the Pennsylvania Railroad, gave an address before the Franklin

Institute of Pennsylvania on "Engineering Reminiscences." After speaking of my father's advanced and splendid work, he added, "I regard his record as an engineer as being extraordinary . . . One wonders what would have been the history of railroads in this country if the advanced views of that young engineer, formulated one hundred and five years ago, had been generally adopted and the construction of railroads rapidly expedited."

SOME years ago, at the request of William and Mary College in Virginia, a memorial room for the study of science was given by my sister Agnes in memory of Father, and of our great-grandfather, Edmund Randolph, also a graduate of that college. The following inscriptions are on the tablets outside the large room for students, designated as the Randolph-Robinson Lecture Hall:

MONCURE ROBINSON

1802—1891

STUDENT AT THE COLLEGE OF WILLIAM AND MARY.  
LEADING ADVOCATE OF RAILROADS IN VIRGINIA, IN  
PREFERENCE TO CANALS. SURVEYED POTTSVILLE AND  
DANVILLE RAILROAD 1829—FIRST RAILROAD CON-  
STRUCTED IN THE UNITED STATES. CHIEF ENGINEER,  
PETERSBURG AND ROANOKE RAILROAD, PETERSBURG  
AND RICHMOND RAILROAD 1831. CHIEF ENGINEER,  
RICHMOND, FREDERICKSBURG AND POTOMAC RAIL-  
ROAD 1832. CHIEF ENGINEER, PHILADELPHIA AND  
READING RAILROAD 1834.



## EDMUND RANDOLPH

1753—1813

STUDENT AT THE COLLEGE OF WILLIAM AND MARY.  
AIDE-DE-CAMP TO WASHINGTON 1775. MEMBER OF  
CONVENTION OF 1776. MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF  
VISITORS OF THE COLLEGE OF WILLIAM AND MARY.  
DELEGATE TO THE CONTINENTAL CONGRESS 1779-  
1783. GOVERNOR OF VIRGINIA 1786-1788. ATTOR-  
NEY-GENERAL OF THE UNITED STATES 1789-1794.  
SECRETARY OF STATE OF THE UNITED STATES OF  
AMERICA 1794-1795.

FATHER's early experiences in France, added to his many visits later, were likely one of the reasons for his great admiration of the French, their literature, their distinguished men, their food and their light wines. Each year he would import for himself, and to give to his married children and his friends, many barrels of these wines. He insisted that his children should be given some in water with their meals when young, to prevent—so he said—a taste for stronger liquor. He contended that this was one of the reasons why the French were a sober race. I fear, however, the wine and water régime did not succeed with every member of his family.

FATHER had a horror of whiskey, and when my mother was over seventy and ordered by Dr. William Pepper to take a tablespoonful in water twice a day with her meals, he was very much upset, and gently urged her not to obey "that foolish young man," as

whiskey was very insidious, and even at her age she might become a drunkard. At that time Dr. Pepper was some fifty years of age—a distinguished physician, and Provost of the University of Pennsylvania.

DR. PEPPER had another patient in my parents' house.

THIS is a story with a prologue. Mrs. Owen Wister, mother of Owen Wister, the novelist, had given a beautiful white Persian cat to my sister Fanny. Father, though caring little for animals, became much interested in Fluff, as she was called. He would remark that she made him almost believe in the transmigration of souls, and if such was the case, Madame Fluff must have been a great lady in a former life, although no better than she should have been.

Two or three times a year Fluff would leave her silk cushion in my mother's room and seek the quiet of my father's dressing-closet, a place she never entered except on these occasions, which always seemed to occur about midnight. He, anxious, would go to my mother's room, awaken her by saying, "My dear, Fluff is not comfortable. I am distressed at disturbing you, but I know she needs you, for you know much more about these matters than I do." I am not sure what followed, but the next morning there were likely to be three or four fluffy balls in the corner of the closet, and a happy mother. Also, much grumbling from John, the coachman, that it made him "feel like a

murderer, drowning so many kittens of that cat of Miss Fanny's."

ALAS, Fluff's morals, even when she had reached the ripe age of twelve years, had not improved, and one day she was taken very ill, too prostrated to leave her cushion behind the window curtain. My mother was recovering from pneumonia, with Dr. Pepper in attendance. I, not suspecting the real cause, and anxious, asked Dr. Pepper's advice. He prescribed a few drops of brandy, given frequently through the day, although he doubted if at her age it would do much good. Later in the day when he returned, he drew aside the curtain to see his patient, and there in the basket Madame Fluff was lying, fully recovered, and beside her, a coal black kitten!

My father was a moderate eater but an epicure. Nothing gave him more pleasure than to entertain his friends and give them his best: terrapin, Todd ham, chicken salad, canvas-back ducks, Augustine's croquettes, Clos Vougeot, warmed just to the heat of the room, champagne ice cold, old Madeira strained through paper, and all other delicacies of long ago,—and such cooking! Ben's fried chicken and corn balls and his calves foot jelly even now make my mouth water.

IN those days good food was very important. During the cold weather grouse, pheasants, ducks and venison would always be hanging in the outside



kitchen, and above all, a leg of Southdown mutton. Where, unless in England, do you now find such a rarity? Of course it was hung three weeks, so as to be in perfect condition, then roasted to a turn in a tin kitchen placed in front of the open range, turned often and basted constantly. Roasting in a range oven was considered impossible; neither mutton nor any other meat should be cooked in that barbarous way by a lazy cook. Woe betide her if she did, for Mother always seemed to know, and early the next morning her bedroom bell would ring violently and the cook sent for and threatened with expulsion.

NOTHING was too good for both Father's and Mother's southern friends and relatives, who often came to stay for weeks or even months, and at one time he was obliged to buy a small house on Juniper Street to make room for those that 1319 Spruce Street could not accommodate. Every few years he would say to Mother, "My dear, is it not time for you to give a ball? Spare no expense and make it as handsome as befits your position." Balls in those days were always given in one's own house, and as society was small, the number of guests was at the most only about two hundred and fifty.

NOTWITHSTANDING his generosity and hospitality, my father was economical, objecting to waste of any kind. He did not care to have two newspapers bought when one would do. He did not like to see gas lighted in an empty room. But he was most liberal, particu-

larly to his children, and affectionate to them, though stern. He expected them to do their work first, and have their fun afterwards. He had a contempt for idlers—men who did nothing. His most withering remark for such was, “Born to consume the fruits of the earth.” His watchword was DUTY, and one of his favorite sayings taken from de Tocqueville was, “Life is neither a pleasure nor a pain, but a duty to be done and well done.” A favorite verse of his was,

*I slept and dreamed that life was Beauty;  
I woke, and found that life was Duty:—*

MY mother had, as far as I remember, but two economies: one concerning the theater, the other the hiring of a cab. She would say to her children, “Why hire a cab? John, the coachman, is always in the stable.” For my mother had her carriages and handsome horses, but though my parents lived most comfortably, there was no extravagant display. I never heard the subject of money discussed. Perhaps the importance of wealth came in with the large and rapidly made fortunes of the seventies and eighties. Birth, breeding, education, good manners and beauty, seemed to be the most valued possessions of that earlier time, and we were brought up to feel that we must be worthy of the family and its traditions. People in trade, though no doubt excellent people, were not in my parents’ social class, nor would they expect to be. I remember when once a young friend of mine was introduced to my father, his saying, “I knew your grandfather, sir, a worthy grocer.” The

friend, having a sense of humor, took no offense and often laughed over the incident.

How would my father feel in this year of grace 1937, to have the charming wife of one of his grandsons working in an established business of house-decorating? This world, particularly for women, has indeed changed since my parents' day.

My father was very fond of telling a good story, and this one on manners was a favorite. I am not sure that he knew Chief Justice Marshall personally, but he was an admirer of his and often told stories about him and his courtly ways. Judge Marshall was riding one day with a friend over his plantation. A negro took off his hat and bowed low as they rode past. Much to the friend's surprise, the Chief Justice took off his hat and bowed equally low. "What," said his friend, "you take off your hat to a slave!" "Surely," said Judge Marshall, "you would not have my slave with better manners than I have."

THERE is another story about Judge Marshall that my father often laughed over. There was a certain Colonel Pickett whose plantation adjoined Marshall's, and who was distressed that his cattle were in much less good condition than his neighbor's. He took his overseer to task and asked him the reason. The overseer in return asked the following: "Colonel, is yo' fat?" "No," said the Colonel. "Is Mis' Pickett fat?" "No," again was the answer. "Is yo' chillun fat?"



“No,” again. “Well, Colonel, I spec’ da reason is dat fat don’t run in de Pickett family.”

My mother was the daughter of Bennett Taylor, an intimate friend of John Robinson, my father’s father. I know little of him, except that he was a lawyer and from Virginia; a graduate of William and Mary and Princeton University, and disputed First Honors there, whatever they were, with a future Bishop Hobart, whoever he was. His wife, my grandmother—Susan Beverley Randolph—was the eldest daughter of Edmund Randolph, Governor of Virginia, first Attorney-General of the United States, and later successor to Thomas Jefferson as Secretary of State. Susan Randolph had a brilliant mind and a merry wit, and so was well able to enjoy the important people of that day—Washington, Burr, Hamilton and others whom she met at her father’s house in Williamsburg.

THE following letter shows not only the affection between father and daughter, but also their intellectual friendship:

MY DEAREST FATHER,

Your last letter brought such painful recollections so forcibly to my mind, that in a fit of despair I persuaded myself that there were some regrets so acute that time would have no power in ameliorating them. Whilst thus desponding, I read accidentally in a french book that was by me, the following quotation from Seneca, “Il n’y a rien au monde qui se fasse tant admirer qu’un homme qui sait être malheureux avec courage.” I could not avoid then reflecting how singular it was, that Heathen Philosophers had inculcated invariably by pre-

cepts and example the most unbending fortitude in all situations, though their ideas of future felicity, if the subject occurred to them at all, were vague and indistinct, whilst a creature enlightened by the promises of the Gospel dared abandon himself to hopelessness. Ought we not to blush at our inferiority in this respect! This is Sunday, and I have been all day engaged with books of piety, which no longer weary me. Formerly the perusal of them was a task I performed reluctantly, but they now appear like friends, who in a moment of affliction have soothed and consoled me.

I am greatly indebted to you for writing so regularly. It relieves me from inexpressible anxiety. The determination announced in your last, of residing with your family, was most gratifying to me and exactly what I have always wished. When you require change of scene you might visit your other children, but I think I am entitled to a preference as to your permanent establishment. My small family and uninterrupted health seem to make it more peculiarly proper that you should select me to give you those attentions so necessary to your comfort.

. . . I preach philosophy but do not practice it, as you will see by the weakness of this letter, but I like to write to you whatever first occurs to me, and make it a rule not to alter or destroy my letters. It is more like conversing with you.

In the month of March I shall be with you, my beloved Father! when I hope we meet to part no more, or at least for a very short time. I cannot be happy if separated from you.

Your dutiful and affectionate child,

SUSAN BEVERLEY TAYLOR.

Shortly after the writing of this letter, Edmund Randolph made his home with this Susan and her husband, until his death in 1813.



My grandmother Taylor had two children, Charlotte, my mother, and a son, John, some ten years older. John married Patty Randolph, a daughter of Thomas Mann Randolph and a granddaughter of Thomas Jefferson. After their marriage, they made their home not far from Monticello, in Charlottesville, and he and his family are buried in the graveyard there.

WHEN first married grandfather and grandmother Taylor lived at Avon Hill, on the bank of the Shenandoah River, but later, fearing malaria, they bought a plantation called Elmington, near Berryville, Virginia, where my mother was born three months after her father's death. This house, with its well proportioned rooms, each with a large fireplace, and its wide hall with a fine stairway at the side, was—even when I saw it in its shabby old age—an agreeable reminder of the past. The overseer's house and servants' quarters, laundry and kitchen were outside of the main building. The food was always brought by the young slaves running from the kitchen to the dining-room, and woe betide them if it were cold. Even in later days at my father's house at Penllyn, this custom was adhered to.

My mother's life on the plantation at Elmington must have been a solitary one, seeing no white faces during the long winter, with the exception of her mother's and the overseer's, and of course, with no companions of her own age. There was no light but

candles, no heat but open fires. She said her face and back were never warm at the same time. In Richmond her mother was very active in seeking agreeable society; while at Elmington she spent most of her days in bed reading the latest books sent her from the Richmond library. Her negro maid was always seated on the stairs outside her door—not even allowed to sew for fear she would be slow in answering my grandmother's call.

WHAT seemed to be the great events in Mother's life at Elmington were her visits to Selma, a plantation near Leesburg, some two or three hours' drive away. Selma belonged to her father's sister—whom I always heard referred to by Mother as Aunt Mason, with a very broad *A*. She had married a General Armistead Mason, a wealthy man for those days, and lived in great style. The only thing I ever saw that belonged to her was a cut-glass celery bowl, which was treated with much respect by Mother and only used on rare occasions.

SELMA had been part of the Raspberry Plantation, a grant to Sir William Thomson of the Middle Temple, London. The estate lay along the Potomac River for about twelve miles, and was several miles broad. Sir William Thomson had never improved it, nor had even visited it, and left it to his granddaughter Ann Thomson, who had married in England, George Mason. The George Masons emigrated to Stafford County, Virginia, and gave the Raspberry

Plantation to their son Stevens Thomson Mason, who built a house there, and lived and died in it. He in turn divided the estate among his large family, Selma becoming the home of his eldest son, General Armistead Thomson Mason. It was a very beautiful house, built around a central court, with a lovely double stairway and splendid arches. Unfortunately, it burned to the ground about 1855, and was replaced by a modest brick structure, which later gave way to the present beautiful house, designed by Stanford White of New York.

GENERAL MASON was a man of fine talent and wide popularity. He served in the War of 1812 as a Colonel of the cavalry, and, like his father, Stevens Thomson Mason, of Raspberry Plantation, was United States Senator from Virginia. On account of a political quarrel, he engaged in a duel with his near cousin, Colonel John Mason McCarty, so tragic that the whole country rang with it. It was fought at Bladensburg, Maryland, an important dueling ground in those days, on February 6, 1819, with muskets at ten paces. Mason dropped dead at first fire, while McCarty was only saved by an accident. (He, McCarty, was later killed in a duel by Aaron Burr).

MASON left a young and devoted widow, my mother's Aunt Mason, with one child, Stevens Mason, a pretty little boy but a few months old. McCarty was a brilliant young lawyer of the same county, and soon after the duel he was married to the lovely Lucinda



Lee and settled near Selma, where the young widow Mason lived with her little boy. The McCarty's also had an only son, very promising, in whom they took great pride.

THOUGH living but a few miles apart, the two families, the Masons and the McCartys, never renewed their acquaintance or spoke to each other. Young McCarty was a sportsman, but in all his gunning he was never known to set foot on any part of the Mason estate, whatever luck it might promise. One fatal day in following the flight of game, he mounted a fence, which formed the boundary of the Mason property, and attempted to load in this position. His attention diverted by the movements of the birds or the dogs, he let slip his gun, which exploded and sent the ramrod through his head. He fell on the Mason side, and to make the dramatic situation complete, Stevens Mason, Aunt Mason's son, at that moment came riding by, and the dying youth was carried to the Raspberry plantation, the birthplace of his father's victim, and laid dead in the hall. This was almost the death-blow to the parents of young McCarty.

FROM the day when the body of her husband, General Mason, was brought through it, Aunt Mason never allowed the front door of her house to be opened. It was kept closed until Stevens Mason came of age, when a festival was held in his honor.

AT twenty-one Stevens Mason was rich, attractive

and a dashing young fellow; but a too generous expenditure of his fortune brought reverses which forced him to sell Selma. He joined the army, and while serving as a captain in the Mexican War (1846-1848) was mortally wounded.

I ALWAYS thought from the little things my mother let fall that her feeling for Stevens Mason was something more tender than cousinly. Be that as it may, his visits to Elmington brought at least a little excitement to the long, dreary, winter days. Many years later, when as an old woman at my father's place at Penllyn, my mother was dozing late one afternoon before the fire, likely dreaming of her girlhood, Edward Toland, then a handsome young friend of ours, walked in. My mother, but half awake, put both hands out to welcome him, saying, "Dear Stevens, have you really come? I have been so lonely." And dear Edward Toland played the part of Stevens Mason very prettily.

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YES, mother's life must often have been lonely, and perhaps that well accounts for her dislike of the country and her enjoyment of the gaiety and cheerfulness of the city. When she came to Philadelphia as a bride, in 1835, she remarked that she would rather be an organ grinder's wife there, than have the handsomest place on the James River. All her days in Virginia, however, had not been dreary, for when Grandmother Taylor thought her pretty daughter was drooping she would send for the overseer, tell him Miss Charlotte

looked pale, to sell all but the negroes, for they must go to Richmond. Then the family coach would be put in order and a three days' drive over the dreadful roads would be taken, to spend a month in that gay city, where no doubt Miss Charlotte, as well as her mother, had a merry time.

IN 1833 a great event occurred: they travelled from Richmond to Washington, part of the way by steamboat. The following letter, written by my grandmother to a nephew, tells of the dangers encountered and the pleasant social time they had in the Washington of President Jackson's day:

WASHINGTON, MARCH 4, 1833.

MY DARLING:

We arrived on Friday morning and I can give you no idea of all I felt in getting into a steamboat. I thought I should never see you or John again. It was snowing and blowing and I believed my last moments were approaching. I suffered so much from fear that I am sure if my hair had not already been gray, it would have become so that night. Charlotte was appalled at the broad water, but calm and composed. My surprise and joy when a bell announced Alexandria, was great. We were only three or four hours performing our little voyage. It is a wonderful invention. Col. Jones, an old friend from Virginia, and the Adjutant General (I always give titles), carried Charlotte to a ball at Monsieur Serrurier's, the French Minister. She was enchanted and desires me to inform you she used gold spoons to eat ice-cream. White servants magnificently dressed in silk stockings, with other European luxuries, completed her wonder. She goes this evening to the Inauguration Ball. Lewis Randolph begs she will display no country signs of wonder.



Lewis looks thin and pale, and I fancy not happy—dear fellow, I cannot bear he should be a clerk for I love him very much and there is something in this dependent situation that I think worse than the most abject independence.

We are in comfortable lodgings with an obliging Virginia Landlady who knew me formerly. I wish you were here. Charlotte says she pities John and Edwin for never having seen Washington. I expect she will feel great superiority over you both for this advantage. I went to Congress but it was the last day and no interest except from the bustle and confusion. I saw only the great men's heads and they are pretty much like other people's. Mary Randolph and Dr. Brockenbrough were to have joined our party, but they have not arrived. I keep myself as quiet as I can, have come here only as Charlotte's duenna to watch her in private rather than in public. Mr. Clay has immortalized himself and saved the country by his bill reducing the tariff—so say his friends. John Randolph is here in a curious style, an English chariot and four horses with two men and a barefooted boy, who is the attendant of seven dogs. He is probably to go in the same steamboat with me to Fredericksburg. God bless my own boy. Write to me soon in Richmond where I have to be ere long. I am writing early in the morning, my only leisure time.

Your own,

S. B. TAYLOR.

EDWIN H. RANDOLPH, ESQR.,  
Elk Hill P. O.,  
Amelia County,  
Virginia.

My mother's education, if you call it education, was given her by occasional English and French teachers who came from Berryville. The dining-room at Elmington was her schoolroom, and I fear she was

an indifferent pupil. Ben, her slave and contemporary, while polishing the dinner table during the lesson hour, learned to speak French far better than she did.

IN the early days in Virginia there was a custom, that if a slave was born about the same time as a child to the master and mistress, that slave belonged to the child. So it was with Benjamin Dangerfield and my mother—and how devoted he was to her. He was a fine looking colored man, six feet and over, of the highest character and proud of it. He once said to my sister Agnes: “Miss Agnes, the Judge paid me a compliment yesterday. He said I was mighty honorable looking.” In memory I still see Ben as he looked when he was the farmer at my father’s place at Penllyn, riding to church on Sunday mornings—white trousers, gray coat and a high gray hat. On his return from church, the order of his day was to pay Miss Charlotte a visit, and my mother, in her fresh muslin wrapper and ruffled petticoats, standing on the brick porch, would make Ben a mint julep—at times half scolding him saying, the chickens were thin, or the peas old. Smiling at her fault-finding, he would answer, “Now, Miss Charlotte, yo’ knows yo’s too particular. Yo’ always has been spoiled.”

As a young man, Ben wished to marry a slave from another plantation. My grandmother did not approve of the girl and made things so disagreeable for Ben that he ran away. He was caught and imprisoned, and





BENJAMIN DANGERFIELD  
From a photograph



when Grandmother wished to pay whatever was necessary to bring him back to Elmington, Ben sent word he would come back on one condition—that his running away should never be spoken of—and it never was.

WHEN my father and mother were married and came to live in Philadelphia, Ben came with them but without his wife, Judy. In time, however, he saved enough money to buy Judy and bring her north. Mother never cared for Judy, and she, I think, was jealous of Ben's devotion to his mistress. One day trouble came, and Judy decided to leave. She tried to make Ben go with her, but he said, "No, no, Judy, though I loves yo' very much, if yo' leaves Penllyn, yo' goes alone, for I belongs to Miss Charlotte and my duty is to stay with her." So Judy left, and Ben was disconsolate for many weeks; but one hot Sunday, fat old Judy was seen toiling up the Penllyn Pike and on reaching the farm house she walked in. Ben, all hunched up and smoking his pipe by the fire, didn't even turn his head, but muttered, "Has yo' come back?" "Yes, Ben, I'se thought it over. If yo' belongs to Miss Charlotte, I mus' belong to yo', for yo' bought me." After a moment's pause she quickly added, "But it doesn't mean I won't take the broom to yo' when yo' gets ornery."

My father cared for and admired Ben as much as my mother did, and he was always considered a member of the household. If a wedding or a ball were on



hand, Ben, resplendent in his blue coat and brass buttons, ushered in the guests. At the only Christmas dinner I remember, after the cloth was removed and the nuts and Madeira brought on, Father handed Ben a glass of wine and asked him to drink a toast. "With yo' permission, Sir," Ben said, "I drink this toast to de ladies." Lifting his glass high and with a low bow, he gave the following, "Ladies, this toast to yo'. Peace at home, happiness abroad. Obey yo' husbands and serve de Lord."

ALAS, one summer not long after this, Ben lay dying and he took long about it. Every morning my mother went across the green lawn to the farm house, and all day she stayed by Ben's bedside, reading the Bible or talking gently of old times to him, and he died with a smile on his lips for "Miss Charlotte", and her hand in his. He was buried in the graveyard of the Mount Pleasant Baptist Church on the Morris Road. The inscription written by my father I am sure would please Ben. It is on his tombstone and reads as follows:

HERE LIE THE REMAINS OF  
BENJAMIN DANGERFIELD  
A THOUGHTFUL, UPRIGHT MAN  
AND SINCERE CHRISTIAN, WHOSE  
WHOLE AMBITION FROM EARLY MANHOOD  
TO THE CLOSE OF LIFE, WAS LIMITED TO  
WALKING HUMBLY BEFORE HIS MAKER  
AND DOING HIS DUTY TO GOD AND MAN  
IN THE STATE OF LIFE WHICH PLEASED  
THE ALMIGHTY TO PLACE HIM.

ERECTED BY HIS FRIEND,  
MONCURE ROBINSON.

THOUGH Ben came to Philadelphia with my parents in 1835, the other slaves belonging to my grandmother Taylor were not freed until after her death some years later. At that time my father bought a farm near West Chester, Pennsylvania, and gave each slave the choice of either going to Liberia, with enough money to start him there, or coming to live on the farm as his paid servant. If they chose the latter they must sign a paper that they would stay with him for five years. He had a horror that these cared for and irresponsible children might come to harm before they learned to take care of themselves, and had put by money from their wages. He was very pleased that only two slaves broke that contract.

My mother and father were married in 1835, she not yet twenty and he some thirteen years older. Their marriage was perhaps suggested by the friendship of John Robinson, my father's father, for Bennett Taylor and his widow. My grandmother, no doubt, was content that this able and brilliant young engineer should woo her pretty daughter. So my father, then about thirty-two, came to Elmington, ostensibly to see Mrs. Bennett Taylor, but in reality to court, as it was called in those days, and to offer himself to her daughter. My mother thought him agreeable in his talk but a little serious, and was much amused when the day after his arrival he greeted her on the sunny porch before breakfast by saying, "A balmy morning, Miss Taylor." The courting, however, progressed, and they were married, but when Mother's

old Mammy heard of her intended marriage she rushed weeping to my grandmother:—"What's dis I hear about ma baby? Surely, yo' ain't allowin' her to marry dat ole man? Why, dey say his ancestors saw de debil." Though there seemed little about my father to please the devil, this may account for some of the peculiarities of his children.

My grandmother suggested that as Mr. Robinson was so many years older than her daughter, it would not be fitting for her to call him Moncure. My mother disagreed and said, "Old or not, if I marry him I will not call him Mr. Robinson. I would rather call him nothing." Which she did. She would always speak to him through someone else, as, "Nathalie, ask your father if he wishes some butter." In her letters to him she always began, "My dear," followed by a dash.

APPARENTLY the southern women of that day did not think it maidenly to make any display of affection towards the men they married, but notwithstanding this outward coldness, she respected and admired my father greatly, and was a most loyal and devoted wife, —ever attentive to his comfort and most willing to entertain his many relations and friends, an arduous task as she was far from strong. Her idea of a wife's duty was very strict: any married woman with a male admirer was termed by her a baggage; and the woman who left her husband, if she had children, was worse than an animal, and should be outcast from society. My father was truly devoted to her and was her lover



to the last. He bore with much humor and no resentment her absorbing love for her children, sometimes misquoting, "My wife was my wife till she gave me a son; I ceased from that moment to be number one." Once the question came up—should not a woman care for her husband more than for her son. My mother flared up and said, "Impossible. How could a woman care more for another woman's child than her own?"

THE following is a letter written some six months after her marriage to my father:

DEAR —,

ELMINGTON, AUGUST 7, 1835.

Mama is going to Selma and wished me to accompany her but I have determined to remain at home in order to write to you. Ought you not to be obliged to me for depriving myself of the pleasure of seeing today that dearest of all places? It is the greatest sacrifice I have ever made in my life. Home is delightful, everything looks exactly as it did last summer. I am sure that I have been in a dream for six months and that I am *still* Miss Charlotte Taylor and *not* Mrs. Moncure Robinson. Nothing will convince me to the contrary but seeing *you*. I wish you would decline that trip to New York and come to Elmington, breathing this pure air will do you more good than *Sixteen Hundred* dollars. My head aches so violently that I must conclude, so good-bye until Friday. Love to all. Tell Octavia to kiss Cornelia for me. I have been every day expecting to hear from her. Brother is quite sick. I am very uneasy about him; he has not been well since he was in Philadelphia. Please go and see E. Daniel and give my best love to her.

Yours, for ever and ever,

C. ROBINSON.

TO MONCURE ROBINSON,  
Richmond, Va.



AFTER his marriage my father came to live definitely in Philadelphia, likely because at that time he was building the main line of the Reading Road. He had lived there from time to time before his marriage and had made many friends, among them Dr. and Mrs. James Rush, he the son of Dr. Benjamin Rush, who was an eminent physician and one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence. Mrs. Rush kindly suggested that she should furnish for my father the house he had bought for his young wife to live in at 329 Chestnut Street. Judging from the very beautiful damask curtains still existing in my day she showed much taste and discrimination in the furnishing.

DR. and MRS. RUSH were at that time the leaders of society—she was a Miss Ridgway—and both were devoted to my father. At Dr. Rush's death, Father was left a legacy of money. This he refused to accept, and in its place the executors sent him two large Sevres vases on ebony and gilt pedestals. I remember them as always standing in the corners of the front drawing-room in the Spruce Street house. After my mother's death they were sent to the Ridgway Branch of the Library Company of Philadelphia on South Broad Street, to which Dr. Rush had left his valuable library, and there they still are.

THE following note from Mrs. Rush to my father, was written about the time of his marriage—

DE MANLETS.

MR. MONCURE ROBINSON,  
329 Chestnut Street.

MY DEAR SIR:

I cannot tell you how disappointed I was at hearing, this morning, that you had twice yesterday done us the favor to call. I was very unwell and Dr. Rush, as I had fever, had positively ordered that I should keep my bed and be bled. His orders were obeyed and I lost the pleasure of seeing you.

I would not, perhaps, have been so docile had I not been very anxious to be well tomorrow evening when I anticipate the pleasure of receiving my friends. I wish that I could anticipate the pleasure of seeing you.

Next Sunday evening I shall be at home, I hope quite recovered, and will be delighted to see you and have a long talk.

With kind remembrances to Mrs. Robinson who I will be most happy to visit whenever she feels disposed to receive me,

Believe me, my dear sir,

Ever

Very truly yours,

ANN RUSH,  
358 Spruce Street.

ANOTHER old friend of my father's in Philadelphia was Horace Binney, who was born in 1780 and who became an important citizen and very prominent lawyer, for many years the leader of the Pennsylvania Bar, and even to this day often quoted. He was also a member of Congress from 1833 to 1835. Mr. Binney was one of the most strenuous opposers of gas being installed for lighting purposes in Philadelphia, pre-

dicting that explosions would constantly occur, resulting in the deaths of many citizens.

IN those days the famous Wistar Parties were a very important private entertainment for gentlemen. They were begun by Dr. Caspar Wistar, in his capacity as President of the Philosophical Society, and at his death in 1818 were formally organized and named in his honor. The following note from Mr. Binney, regretting my father's invitation to one of these parties, proves perhaps that if you refrain from such festivities you will likely live, as he did, to the age of ninety-five.

FEBRUARY 20.

MY DEAR MR. ROBINSON:

I should most willingly and to my own profit join your Wistar Party were I younger, and stronger, and of better endurance than I am. For several years I have had to retire from such indulgence which had only this good consequence, that when they occurred on Saturday evening, they uniformly made Sunday a fast day. This consequence, however, though good was not canonical, and I prefer eating my mutton on Sunday with Thankfulness.

Very truly yours,

HOR. BINNEY.

To quote old Ben: he once said to my brother Beverley, whom for some reason he always called Teddy, "Them Wistar Parties is the place for good eating."

AMONG my father's younger friends of later years were Mr. Anthony J. Drexel, the first Philadelphia



partner of J. Pierpont Morgan, founder of Drexel & Company in Philadelphia, and his intimate friend, George Childs, founder and editor for many years of the *Public Ledger*. Father would often visit the latter in his offices, and he was much struck by Mr. Child's kindly disposition and would cite as an example his gift of a beautiful tea cup and saucer to any young or old lady visiting his office.

IN the early part of the nineteenth century and before the Civil War, Philadelphia was perhaps more of a national center than it is today. Many distinguished people lived here, others passed through on their way to Washington. One of the proudest moments of my mother's life was at some ball, when Henry Clay escorted her to supper, and Daniel Webster sat on her other side. Great, however, as that honor was, her vanity, I think, was more flattered when, during a summer spent at Bordentown, Joseph Bonaparte, Napoleon's brother, pinched her arm and told her she was the most beautiful girl he had seen since leaving France.

BORDENTOWN, where my parents when young spent four or five summers, is on the east bank of the Delaware River. The town is over two hundred years old, originally designated as "Farnsworth Landing," but it was a Joseph Borden who laid out the town and named it for himself. Admiral Charles Stewart, grandfather of Charles Stewart Parnell, the *uncrowned king* of Ireland, lived there, as did



J. Fenimore Cooper and Francis Hopkinson, Continental Congressman from New Jersey. But its most famous resident was Joseph Bonaparte, oldest brother of Napoleon, and himself a former King of Spain. Bonaparte came to Philadelphia immediately after Waterloo, and resided for some time on Ninth Street near Spruce. Later he moved to a delightful yellow and white mansion in Bordentown, overlooking the Delaware, which he called Point Breeze, where he lived for two decades, entertaining many visitors of note, among them Nicholas Biddle, President of the United States Bank. While in America, he used the title of Comte de Survilliers.

PRINCE NAPOLEON LUCIEN CHARLES MURAT also lived at Bordentown. He was the son of Napoleon's youngest sister, Caroline, and the great General Joachim Murat, whom Napoleon had made King of Naples. Lucien Charles Murat's wife was a Miss Georgina Frazer of Baltimore, very wealthy at the time of her marriage but later losing her fortune. She was then obliged to open a small school for young children at Bordentown, "Madame Murat's School," as it was called, where my older brothers were sent as children during the summer. A letter from my mother to my father, referring to the school, may be of interest:

TUESDAY.

MY DEAR —,

I have not written to you for some time. I have been very busy and I never think of your being uneasy. Today I am not well. I am suffering from toothache and sore

throat. The toothache kept me awake last night so I feel very little disposed to write and should not do so but that I am afraid that you will think something is the matter. The boys are well and going to school. John is in a class with William McKnight who is 14. John says his teacher says he knows a great deal for his age. Our boys at least appear to know more than the Borden-town children. I believe the height of your ambition is for them to be good *Jersey men*. Eddy's school began yesterday. He gives a famous account of himself; he says he is in a class with women as big as I am. They ride every evening which keeps me perfectly miserable. The horse rears and kicks; it has thrown Edmund once and also threw little Murat who rides remarkably well. Notwithstanding *all this*, I permit the children to ride. Mrs. Baker will not let Dallas go near it; do not say after this that I am timid about the children or that I allow my fears to govern me as regards them. My tooth aches and I feel so unwell I must finish my letter. I was delighted to hear dear Octave was coming with you. Tell her she must not disappoint me. How glad I shall be to see you all. My cook that you thought so good is, I think, very indifferent; she is cross and lazy, so cross that I cannot teach her the little I know. I hope she will do better when you come. If I could get another I would not keep her. Fondest of love to all. God bless you.

Yours always,

C. ROBINSON.

THE year after my parents were married, my father was obliged to go to Europe on business. Mother had a young baby whom she could not leave, and so her mother came to spend the winter with her. Father gave strict instructions for Mother to return the hospitality that had been shown her in Philadelphia, and for Madame Rush to be consulted so that a

proper entertainment might be given. A ball was decided on. My mother, being liberal minded and fearing Mrs. Rush might be too economical in ordering the supper, doubled every order, and consequently had great difficulty in eating or giving away the many good things left over.

GRANDMOTHER TAYLOR, having been for many years the important woman in Williamsburg and Berryville, could not understand why, when she called from her window in Philadelphia, commanding the driver of a passing omnibus to stop, he would not wait for her until she had finished dressing. She was a superstitious person, and if by chance she put on her skirt wrong side out, she would wear it that way no matter where she was going, fearing bad luck if she changed, much to her daughter's annoyance. She was also very particular about Mother's behavior. One night during my father's absence in Europe my mother returned from some entertainment at midnight and rang the bell. No answer. She rang again many times. Finally a voice from above, "Who's there?" "Mother, it is Charlotte." "What Charlotte?" "Your daughter, Charlotte." "It cannot be my daughter—she is a respectable married woman and would never return at this unseemly hour."

My mother was small and slight, with wavy, dark brown hair parted over a handsome, high brow; very brilliant brown eyes, an almost too perfect nose, and a fine, dark skin with rich color. Father said that





CHARLOTTE TAYLOR ROBINSON

From the portrait by Thomas Sully  
In the possession of Mrs. J. Randolph Robinson





Sully's portrait never did her justice. No wonder she was called in her day the prettiest girl in Virginia. She had a keen sense of humor and a quick temper that was soon over; she was excitable and very emotional, with laughter and tears close together, and she was most unselfish. She was much afraid of thunderstorms, and when there was one she would run to her room, dropping her corsets and hairpins on the way, fearing the steel would attract the lightning, and calling to her children to follow. There she would throw herself on the bed with a pillow over her head, the shutters tightly closed no matter how hot the day, until the storm was over.

THOUGH my mother was fearful of many seeming dangers besides thunderstorms, fire had no terror for her. The chimney in her bedroom would often catch on fire, owing to the large wood blaze that was always burning on the hearth. Smoke and flames would pour out, to the alarm of the neighbors, and burning soot would fall on the hearth. Mother, undisturbed, would remain calmly on her sofa, and when frightened servants would appear she would tell them not to be anxious: in Virginia, chimneys constantly caught on fire; it was an excellent way to clean them; all that was necessary was for some man in the house, either the butler or the coachman, to go to the roof and pour salt—and much of it—down the chimney, and to tell one of the women servants to fetch a large blanket and hold it in front of the hearth to prevent the soot from soiling the carpet. The house never did catch on fire,

but more, I feel, through good luck than good management.

As I look back, the Victorian Spruce Street house was very dignified and charming. There were two large drawing rooms on the first floor with beautiful glass chandeliers, candelabra on the walls, all burning candles, two long mirrors at the end of each room, and one over each of the two simple but handsome marble mantelpieces. Each room had two open fires, one burning wood held on large brass andirons, the other burning soft cannel-coal. A few large landscape paintings adorned the walls,—I doubt if they were fine ones, but the effect was good. The curtains and furniture in the front room were of crimson satin damask, and those in the back were of blue. There were thick velvet carpets on the floors. The long and wide hall was blocked off from the kitchen by white and pink oleander trees, and there was a gorgeous crimson velvet carpet on the halls and wide stairs.

My earliest recollections are the Sunday evenings in my mother's large room. This room was the gathering place, Sundays and weekdays, for her amusing and excitable family, as well as for the many Southern cousins who were often with us. Mother was always there, lying on the sofa before a bright wood fire, ready with her sympathy and interest, to listen to all our troubles and pleasures. On these Sunday evenings she felt it her duty to hear the children recite their catechism, which was stumbled through; the children



seldom knowing their duty towards God and never that towards their neighbor. The capitals of the States were next in order. If we were trying over our catechism, we were impossible over the capitals, and on no occasion do I remember any of us knowing the capital of Virginia,—Mother's native and beloved State, which tried her exceedingly. This concluded, Mother, a bit exhausted but game, took up the last Sabbath duty—combing and brushing Moncure's, the youngest of her five sons, thick and dirty hair; he, a boy of eleven or twelve. There were many signs of temper, efforts by Moncure to get away, and sharp taps of the brush by Mother.

HER room seemed to me a beautiful spot, with the bright wood fire and the large mahogany bed to which any ailing child was brought, though it might have scarlet fever, measles or whooping-cough. In that day contagion was not thought of, so the rest of the family were never kept out. There were practically no trained nurses, so Mother did the nursing, and what a tender, loving nurse she was. When convalescing, how delightfully she read to you. One just longed to be sick, and when dear Dr. John Meigs, the family physician, said you were well enough for currant jelly on your bread, Heaven seemed very near. A large mahogany wardrobe stood between the two doors in the room, one leading to my father's library, the other to the hall; and on each side of the wardrobe, the portraits of the two men Mother honored most—her hero, General Robert E. Lee, and her beautiful son,



Edmund. A story goes that at his wedding, Mother was asked by a guest if she had ever seen anyone more beautiful than the bride. Her outraged answer was, "Have you seen Edmund?"

OF General Lee, she said that just before the end of the Civil War, she was at an old, reliable shop in Philadelphia, called Sharpless, when a salesman, much excited, said to her, "Mrs. Robinson, have you heard the wonderful news? General Lee has surrendered." Mother, in greater excitement and real distress, burst into tears and cried, "It can't be true. General Lee would never surrender."

BOTH my father and mother were great southern sympathizers, and why they got into no trouble during the Civil War I do not understand, for they constantly helped their friends from the South, and sent food to the southern prisoners. Even up to the time of my mother's death she was bitter against the North, and I was brought up to believe that the great Lincoln was a "low, vulgar rascal." Her principal grievance against the North seemed to be that a handsome nephew who had graduated with high honors from the University of Virginia, not only had fought for four years through the War, living at one time for three days on ears of dried corn (one of which Mother always kept in her wardrobe), but also after the war had married the ugliest woman in Virginia.

MOTHER, when asked how many children she had,

would answer: "Eleven, and two left at the door, and Johnny Cunningham." I feel this needs a little explanation. In those early days there were no places for unwanted babies, except the doorsteps of the well-to-do, and the two left at my parents' door at different times belonged to that pitiful class. My mother loved babies and it took much persuasion from my father to convince her that it would be better to give them to some worthy woman without a family to bring up; Father, of course, providing the wherewithal. Johnny Cunningham was the son of a sister of my father's who died when the child was born. Mother, who must have had at that time five or six children, gladly undertook the care of him, as the following letter to my father shows:

SATURDAY.

MY DEAR —,

I received your letter yesterday and am sorry to hear that you are suffering with your foot and with the ear-ache. You ought to be careful of your foot—it might become serious. I have not written to you because I have been *very* busy and never feel *well* enough to do *half* that I ought to. I thought too you might have written if only a few lines. I should have supposed you were sick but Miss Rebecca Robertson said she had seen you and you were looking very well. I am very sorry to hear that Octavia is not well. No one knows this annoyance of bad health except those that have had it and most truly do I sympathize with her. I hope though *she* is only unwell from this excitement she has gone through in the last two months, if she has *no disease* it will pass away and she will be as strong as she has always been in a short time.

You say if I was to see her I would not wish her to take the dear little baby this summer. I do not under-

stand *this*, for I certainly never expressed any wish to part with the baby; it would be very painful for me to do so for I already love him very much and am very unwilling to *yield* the *pleasure* of taking care of him to anyone. I began my letter this morning and was interrupted so frequently I could not finish it. Mr. Cunningham arrived at half past four and I have left him to write a few lines more and send it to the post office. He says your foot is not so bad but that you are *quite deaf*. I am sorry you have another evidence of *Old Age*. I hope I will hear from you before you come home, for really you have treated me very badly. The children are well. Charley is as sweet as ever. Young Dr. Meigs was here the other day and Charley *screwed up his nose*, laughed and jumped at him. I am sure he took him for you. I have heard from John; he is very hard at work, his room-mates interrupt him so that he is obliged to go in the woods for study.

Love to all, particularly to dear Octave. I wish to write to her and have intended it each day, but my time is so much occupied or I am such a bad manager of it that I have not a moment. I certainly do not want industry. I have risen every morning at six o'clock since you left home. We breakfast at 7. I read prayers after breakfast, and before 8 o'clock. Agnes is at Miss Peakes practising. This appears like good management but still I have not a moment. I must say good-bye as Ben is waiting.

Always yours,

C. R.

As one may suspect from the above letter, there was little love lost between my mother and her sister-in-law, Octavia.

WHEN little Johnny Cunningham died two years later, his father, to show his appreciation, presented



Mother with a silver pitcher. She was very proud of this gift. She said it was the only thing that really belonged to her, and in later days when my father was displeased by his sons' extravagance and threatened to stop their allowances, Mother always brought him to terms by her threat, "If you do, I will sell my silver pitcher." After her death, when the household goods were appraised, the wonderful silver pitcher was valued at only twenty-three dollars.

BEFORE this family of eleven entered into my daily life—for I was the youngest of them—three of the eleven, Conway, Susan and Charlotte, had died. I do not know where they came in, as they died long before my day. My only knowledge was of Susan's little wooden doll, laid carefully away in Mother's wardrobe, and I early learned that it hurt Mother for me to ask to play with it. John, Edmund and Beverley had left home and I never really knew them. Agnes was married, but lived in Philadelphia, and was not only constantly at the house, but a very important member of the household.

IN the daily meetings in Mother's room there was always much talk and discussion, the older children unsparing in their criticism of each other and everyone else. No one escaped. There were excited discussions as to their appearance, manners and brains. Agnes and Charlie, the witty members of the circle, found much to laugh at and were the ringleaders in all mischief. One of Agnes' pranks was played on a



cousin of her husband, William Savage, a serious and very self-conscious man. She advertised: "Cats wanted," and gave the address of his office. The poor man was persecuted for days: cats great and small were brought in. He had no redress—the newspapers could tell him nothing of the advertiser.

I WAS the victim of another prank. I was quite young and very fat, with a huge tummy, and for some reason I was given a tonic. Agnes and my brother Charlie—a most helpful aid in all Agnes' mischief—wrote on the bottle, "For Tape Worms." I was horribly frightened and ran to Mother, who tried to comfort me, saying it was of course Agnes and Charlie. With renewed courage I told them what Mother had said. I can see their faces now—with such wicked smiles—"Surely, you don't believe Mother? She just said that because you were frightened. Wait until you see the tape worms. Sometimes they are yards and yards long."

OF course, these discussions often caused violent arguments, riots, temper and tears; dear little Mother taking in turn the part of the most down-trodden at the moment, often wringing her hands and saying, "I don't know who made me, but the devil certainly made my children." No matter who made her, her children—and they were a strong, vigorous, opinionated lot, and very disorderly—all loved that dear, loving, unselfish soul. No doubt when these excitements were at their worst, Father should have been

called in to read the riot act. We all stood a bit in awe of him. But Mother likely feared his methods would be too severe for her beloved brood, and so we grew up with little correction, and the one that yelled the loudest was the victor.

As a tribute to my mother, I shall end this chapter with a letter written after her death to her niece by her second son, Edmund—

23 N. WASHINGTON SQUARE,

AUG. 28, '95.

MY DEAR SUE:—

Thank you for your very kind note of sympathy. Mother's death was of course expected. She was very well for a woman of her age, until about a year since, when she began to fail very rapidly, both in mind and body. She was most carefully and tenderly watched by Nathalie and her old maid, Wilkins, and her life was prolonged in that way beyond the expectation of the physicians. The funeral was from the farm at Penllyn and was very simple and touching. There was no one there except the members of the immediate family and a few very intimate friends. The coffin was borne to the grave by her sons, as she had requested, and laid by Father's side.

She had the sweetest, most unselfish, sympathetic and generous nature I have ever known. She was as simple and unspotted from the world as a young child, and kept her marvellous freshness and youthfulness of feeling to the last. I have long lived away from her so that I do not miss her from my daily life, but I had always the happy knowledge while she lived, that some one in the world loved me with a true and unchanging love.

With kindest regards and all good wishes for you and yours,

Affec. yours,

EDMUND RANDOLPH ROBINSON.



## CHAPTER II

# THE CHILDREN

John: *The Engineer*

Edmund: *The Lawyer*

Agnes: *The Charmer*

Beverley: *The Doctor*

Charlie: *The Dilettante*

Moncure: *The Sportsman*

Fanny: *The Enigma*





## CHAPTER II

# THE CHILDREN



### JOHN: *The Engineer*

OF my parents' eleven children, only eight lived to grow up. The two eldest were John Moncure, named for my father's father and mother, and Edmund Randolph, named for my mother's grandfather.

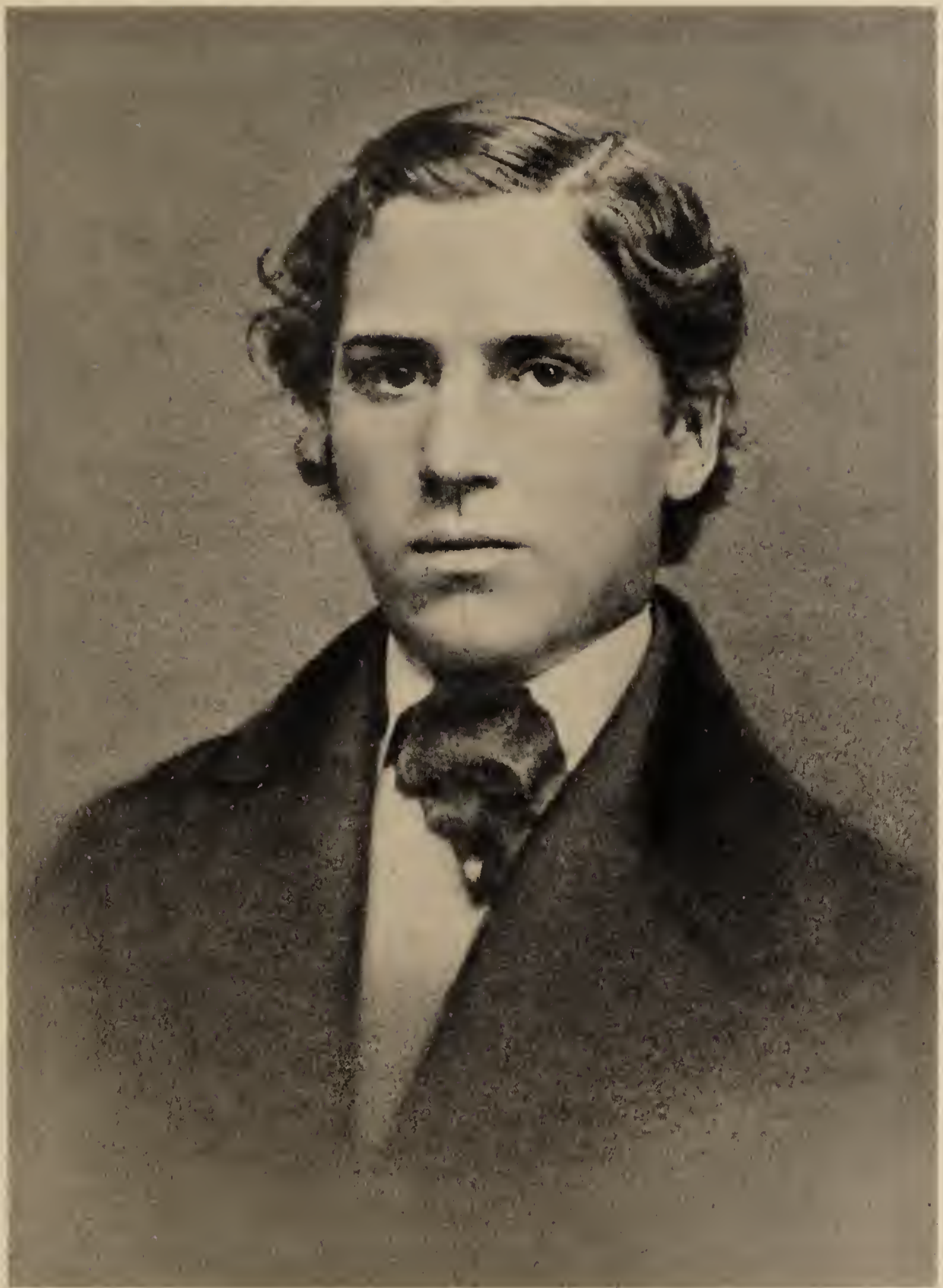
MOTHER said that as boys John did the fighting while Edmund held the books. These characteristics seemed to have followed them through life, for John was a fighter and Edmund intellectual and controlled. Both, however, graduated from Harvard College at the age of sixteen with a *magna cum laude*, Phi Beta Kappa and all honors, and both became distinguished in their different professions.

AFTER graduating from college, John became a civil engineer, as his father had been before him, serving

his apprenticeship in railroad shops that taught him the business from the ground up. In later life his proudest boast was that as president of the Richmond, Fredericksburg and Potomac Railroad he remembered his early training so well, that when the engineer of an express train on which he was travelling was taken ill, he had been able to run the express from Richmond to Baltimore.

DURING the Civil War, he was a colonel of engineers and military superintendent of the Railways of the Confederacy. He ran the blockade twice and was wounded two or three times. During the war much of England's sympathy was with the South, and John was sent by the Confederate government to borrow money for the Southern cause. While in England this fine-looking, young officer was much fêted. Being a simple soul, he was pleased by the attentions he received, particularly by an invitation to visit the Duchess of Sutherland at Stafford House. At a dinner given in his honor his pride had a tumble. One of the courses served was composed of very small eggs. John, too curious to remain silent, asked the Duchess if hen's eggs were a rarity in England. To his mortification and to the amusement of the Duchess, she told him they were plovers' eggs and a great delicacy.

IN the spring of 1936, his two pretty granddaughters, Celia and Ruth, the children of his youngest son, Randolph Robinson, met the Duchess of Sutherland's brother, and through him were asked



JOHN MONCURE ROBINSON  
Enlarged from a photograph





by the Duke and Duchess to stop with them for Ascot Week at Stafford House; they not knowing that their grandfather had stayed there seventy-five years before.

SOON after the war, John married Champe Conway of Richmond, a war belle and beauty, and had eight very good-looking children. He made his home in Baltimore and became president of many important southern railroads and steamship companies.

THOUGH I knew John slightly, he seemed to me a dear person; determined, kind and generous in thought and action, fearless, a splendid friend, easily hurt, and though always ready to fight, very forgiving. He was devoted to his little mother, and so strong, he could pick her up with one arm. A great joke to him was to put her on the top of a high desk in the dining-room and have her bribe him to take her down. When over forty, he and my father—whose will was even stronger than that of his eldest son's and could bear no contradiction, particularly from his children—differed over some railroad matter. They parted in anger, Father forbidding John the house. John was much distressed, but obstinate, and no reconciliation seemed possible.

WHEN John came to Philadelphia, Mother would meet and dine with him at some hotel, though always with Father's knowledge, and two or three times a year she would visit him at his home in Baltimore. For many years this estrangement continued, until a short

time before Father's death he consented to see and forgive John. They met in Mother's big room; John with his arms around Father, crying like a little child, and Father murmuring, "My boy, my boy. I am glad to have you home again."

ALTHOUGH Mother cared for all her children, John, I think, was the one she loved the most; perhaps because he was the eldest, perhaps because of the trouble with Father. Some two years before her death, he died after a short illness, and the hardest thing I ever had to do was to tell her. She wasn't well at the time—a bad cold I think. I began hesitatingly: John wasn't well; his family were anxious; but she must not worry. At once she told me to ring for her old maid, Wilkins, for she must go to Baltimore if John was ill; he needed her. I said, "You are not well enough." Then perhaps something in my face, or intuition made her guess the bitter truth, and with a heart-breaking cry of "My baby," something snapped and my dear little old lady was never the same again.



## EDMUND: *The Lawyer*

THE following letter from my father to his brother Conway, best tells of the happy event in the Robinson family on March 5th, 1838:

PHILADA., MARCH 5, 1838.

MY DEAR CONWAY:

When on my return here I found Charlotte doing so well, I thought it probable that her confinement was not as near at hand as I had supposed it, and wrote the letter enclosed you for our mother, recommending to her to delay setting out until the ice had broken up. It is fortunate that my letter did not reach Richmond before she had set out for Philada. Charlotte was confined very suddenly about four this morning, when but for our mother's presence, she would probably have been more apprehensive of her situation and in consequence more critically situated. As it was, what with our mother, Dr. Charles Meigs and the *sage femme* as Baptiste calls her, all was happily terminated in about an hour and I have now to inform you, that you have a second nephew who gives promise of being one of the most vigorous gentlemen in his day. Having bawled as lustily during the first five minutes and eaten as heartily during the first half hour as most newcomers in this world of trouble do during the first four or five days, I trust the feats in question are indications as to his future competency in encountering its buffets. His nurse says that his appearance gives promise of his turning out a young



Hercules, that he is one of the largest boys she has ever seen with hands and feet more than in proportion, which the aforesaid personage thinks even more indicative of his future size than his present bulk. Be this as it may, we are all agreed that notwithstanding his red face, he is a fine looking fellow *considering*.

All this however is of little interest to you, but what I know you will take interest in, is that Charlotte and her son are both doing as well as they can. Although I dropt a few lines to our father this morning to this effect, I choose not to leave you to learn from him but to apprize you myself of their situation.

The birth of the son instead of a daughter has relieved me of a little dilemma, for Mrs. Taylor had considered it her especial privilege to name this newcomer of whatever sex it might be, and I did not feel willing that it should bear, if a daughter, after our mother's signal effort for Charlotte in coming on, any other name but hers. I should now be disposed to contend for Conway Robinson, Jr., but I see my mother-in-law has set her heart on having her own family represented in him and I shall be obliged to concur, unless you will come to his christening. If you will, I would at all events make a gallant struggle for the name of all others I should prefer his bearing, at the risk of being considered too monopolizing in behalf of my own family.

Farewell, my dear Conway. I would make an apology for this egotistical letter but for the interest you manifested so strongly for Charlotte when I was with you in Richmond. Give my best love to Sue and regards to Miss Edmonia, and believe me

Ever yours,

M. R.

My Grandmother Taylor had her way in giving her father's name of Edmund Randolph to this promising



EDMUND RANDOLPH ROBINSON

From a photograph





“young Hercules,” who later became an unusually handsome man: some six feet, two or three inches in height; distinguished in appearance as well as in manners; cultivated and agreeable; serious, formal, self-controlled; selfish and ambitious; but notwithstanding, a fine, honorable gentleman.

HE was educated with his older brother at Mme. Murat’s School in Bordentown, and later at Dr. Lyon’s in Philadelphia. After graduating from Harvard with a *magna cum laude*, he took up the study of law and became a lawyer of high standing in New York, making his home there.

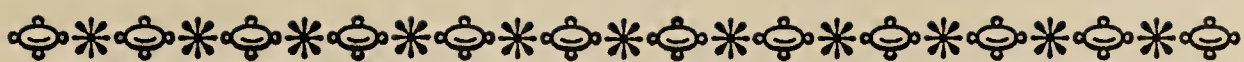
HE married Augusta, the daughter of John Jay of New York, who in the late sixties had been Minister to Vienna, and great-granddaughter of John Jay, first Chief Justice of the United States. Though not good looking, she had much distinction of appearance, wore her clothes well and in this day would have been called smart. She was intelligent, gay, witty and attractive. Edmund was devoted to her and their marriage was a happy one. Unfortunately, Augusta died when quite young, leaving three children. Edmund lived for many years in a large house on Washington Square, and the children were brought up under his watchful eye by a faithful nurse and a handsome, well-bred English lady, whom, strange to relate, he did *not* marry. His three children were Eleanor, the eldest, who married James Lowell Putnam of Boston; Moncure Robinson of New York,



his only son, who died some years ago; and Augusta, the youngest daughter, who married the Honorable Wentworth Chetwynd of the British Navy, a younger brother of Viscount Chetwynd of England.

EDMUND was a true worldling, always seeking the most distinguished society in Europe and the United States, and attentive only to the beautiful and important women of the day. Life, except for his wife's death, treated him well. The only real disappointment I imagine he ever had was when Joseph Choate, instead of himself, was appointed Ambassador to England.

THOUGH temperate in his living, he died when little over fifty, and was buried beside his wife, at Bedford, New York, where for many generations the Jays have had their country home of a thousand acres. Among his pall-bearers were William C. Whitney, James C. Carter, Lawrence Godkin, Bayard Cutting, Austen Fox, Peter Marie of New York; and Dr. Weir Mitchell and Frank Thomson of Philadelphia.



## AGNES: *The Charmer*

AGNES, named for my father's mother, Agnes Conway, comes next. Owing to the deaths of two older little girls she was the only daughter for sixteen years; from the beginning badly spoiled, particularly by her stern but adoring father, who could deny her nothing, and who, I think, was the only person she ever loved,—her Padre, as she called him. In character she was hot-tempered and jealous, resolved to be first in the affections of everyone; bearing no contradiction; determined to have her own way and generally succeeded. She had splendid, generous impulses; wild spirits and a delightful wit; charming, dignified manners; and a most flattering tongue which always made you feel her sympathetic interest, though she cared only momentarily and superficially.

IN appearance and character, Thackeray's description of Beatrix Esmond perhaps best portrays her: "She was a brown beauty: that is, her eyes, hair, and eyebrows and eyelashes were dark: her hair curling with rich undulations, and waving over her shoulders; but her complexion was as dazzling white as snow in sunshine; except her cheeks, which were a bright red,

and her lips, which were of a still deeper crimson. Her mouth and chin, they said, were too large and full, and so they might be for a goddess in marble, but not for a woman whose eyes were fire, whose look was love, whose voice was the sweetest low song, whose shape was perfect symmetry, . . . agile as a nymph, lofty as a queen—now melting, now imperious, now sarcastic . . . ” As I remember her, a superb creature.

IN those far-away days, education for the female was not much considered, though parlor tricks, such as playing on the harp or piano, were taught whether the student had the talent or not. So Agnes played the piano, and was thought by her teacher to have ability and brilliant execution—a promising pupil. Although willing to learn her “piece” to play for company, she was too indifferent or too lazy to work seriously. She had, however, and was very proud of, what was considered at that time a great educational advantage. Few young ladies in the United States in the fifties spoke any language but their own, but she had been sent to a small French school, the head of which was a Parisian lady, Mademoiselle Huton, and there Agnes, much to Father’s delight, learned to speak that language fluently; though even he at times found her grammatical errors and mixing of genders not quite satisfactory.

GROWING up at the beginning of the Civil War, Agnes saw little formal society. During the war she





AGNES CONWAY CHAUNCEY  
Enlarged from a photograph





became engaged to Charles Chauncey, a handsome young cavalry officer, captain in Rush's regiment from Philadelphia, and a son of Father's old and devoted friend, Mr. Nathaniel Chauncey, with whom as a young man he had travelled in Europe. Friendship in those days meant devotion to the dead as well as to the living, and a year seldom passed after Mr. Chauncey's death that my father did not go to New Haven, where his old friend was buried, sit by his grave for an hour, ponder on their long friendship and commune with his dead friend. So this engagement was very gratifying to both families, though it proved a little difficult for Mother, since nothing would satisfy Agnes but to follow Charlie whenever he and his regiment were ordered to different Northern Camps, and Mother—notwithstanding her southern sympathies—was obliged to accompany her daughter.

CHARLIE and AGNES were married at the end of the war. They had no children; and I, as a baby and later as a little child, seemed to fill the place of one in Charlie's affections. I can remember sitting on his knee on the sofa in the sunny dining-room of the Spruce Street house, listening to the many wonderful tales he would tell; some from the Old Testament, others from Pilgrim's Progress. But the story which always made me cry, and which I dearly loved, was the one explaining the meaning of Landseer's engraving on the wall, *Uncle Tom and His Wife for Sale*.

ANOTHER recollection is Charlie's sword, for some reason kept under his bed. I would creep up the stairs to look at it, terrified but admiring, for Agnes had told me that at Gettysburg, Charlie had killed a man with it,—a memory, I think, that weighed heavily on his tender conscience. He found it impossible quite to forgive himself for taking a life, even for his country's sake. Many years later, after he and Agnes had died, in clearing out their house at Narberth, I came across the terrifying sword, the handsome young captain's uniform, and Agnes' bridal wreath of orange blossoms, carefully put away in a closet.

WHEN that excellent movie, *The Birth of a Nation*, was first given in Philadelphia, I had a memorable afternoon when I took my dear brother-in-law to see it. He was then an old man and had never seen a movie. How he enjoyed it! How excited he was by the battles; how thrilled by the love story; how under his breath he cursed—and he could curse violently when aroused—the negro chasing the young heroine—played, I think, by Mae Marsh; and, how loudly he clapped at her rescue by the Ku Klux Klan. Dear Charlie, what a simple, brave, high-minded, loyal gentleman he was; and how angry he could become at what was to him a cruel or dishonorable and unworthy action. He was too good for this wicked world and certainly for the strong-willed family he married into.

As Thackeray to my thinking best describes Agnes' appearance, so the following lines from Kipling, sent



her by my son Philip after Charlie's death, best tell the character of Charles Chauncey—Gentleman:

*E'en as he trod that day to God so walked he from his birth,  
In simpleness and gentleness and honour and clean mirth.*

FOR some years after Charlie and Agnes married, they spent the winters in an attractive house in Philadelphia, where they lived very smartly, served by well-trained French maids, entertaining often and agreeably. The entertainment was usually, as was the custom of the day, a talking party with an elaborate supper. Their summers were spent with Father and Mother, after the burning of the old farm at West Chester and before the purchase of the new one at Penllyn, either at the seashore or at some country place rented by my father.

THREE delightful summers we spent at beautiful Butler Place on the Old York Road, the property of Dr. Owen Wister and his wife. She was the daughter of Pierce Butler and the celebrated English actress, Fanny Kemble. Another summer before the three at Butler Place, we were across the Old York Road at York Farm, which then, I think, belonged to Mrs. Wister's sister, the Honorable Mrs. Leigh.

IN reading the agreeable life of Fanny Kemble, written by Mrs. Bobbe, I was interested to learn that some years later, while passing a summer at York Farm, Mrs. Kemble had listened with great pleasure to the sounds from across the way of her grandson, Owen



Wister, the novelist, then a student at Harvard, playing on a piano. It brought to my mind, though some years earlier, a different music, also wafted across the road while we were at York Farm, when Mr. Wister and I were small children—the angry screams of a naughty boy. My mother, always much excited by a child's distress, would say to my father, "They must be whipping that boy again," and he would reply, "Calm yourself, my dear, no doubt he well deserves it."

DURING the three summers spent at Butler Place, my brother Moncure, the youngest of my parents' sons, then about seventeen, always had many young fellows stopping with him. Agnes at that time had been married some years and was about thirty, but was so handsome, so gay and so understanding that each and every youngster was her devoted slave and admirer.

AMONG them, and perhaps the most adoring, was a red-haired, long-legged, ugly boy named Tyson Morris,—an unhappy fellow. His mother, to whom he was devoted, had died and his father had soon remarried. Tyson was wild and troublesome and did not get on with his stepmother. His father, a stern disciplinarian and no doubt sorely tried, was very severe with him. Finally, the boy refused to call the stepmother *mother* and was ordered by his father to leave his house.

THE Chaunceys were up in arms at such treatment and insisted that Tyson should live with them. As he grew older, no longer a weedy red-haired boy, but a fine looking man,—and Agnes seemingly younger and more lovely looking than ever—gossip began as one may imagine. Moncure, hearing it, was violently excited, would not have his sister talked about, and urged Father to say that Tyson must go. Charlie Chauncey, poor dear, was pulled in two. According to his code, one revered and obeyed one's father-in-law, particularly when he was one's dead father's friend; but one must also be loyal and not suspicious of one's deeply loved wife. Agnes, who had never parted with anything that belonged to her, was much too adept at the art of having her own way to let Tyson go; so there he stayed for more than fifty years, both he and Charlie caring for Agnes; and, more surprising, admiring and respecting each other, devoted friends.

AGNES lived twelve years after Charlie, and Tyson's care and devotion to her were most unselfish and beautiful. Four years after her death Tyson Morris died, a pitiful and broken old man, living only in the past. He had given his whole life to the ones who had taken pity on him when he was an unhappy boy. He is buried at the feet of Agnes and Charlie, and I hope at peace.

ALTHOUGH I have referred in places to the lack of discipline and the spirit of lawlessness in the bringing

up of my brothers and sisters, yet there were certain standards inbred in us. We were never allowed to forget the pride and dignity of family; we must be worthy of it. Perhaps we thought too much of ourselves, and none of us more than Agnes. She considered herself a great lady and indeed she was one. A great pleasure to her was that the name of one of Charles Chauncey's ancestors was among those of the signers of the *Magna Carta*, and that a much later ancestor had been the second president of Harvard College.

A YEAR after Charlie's death she was, as usual, spending the summer in her cottage at Spring Lake; Tyson, as a member of her household for the last forty or fifty years, being with her. A Spring Lake friend told her the neighbors disapproved of the way she was living, Tyson of course the reason. Agnes drawing herself up replied, "Go to those chattering people and tell them that the daughter of Moncure Robinson and the wife of Charles Chauncey can do as she likes." After that she heard no more gossiping.

ABOUT a year before her death she was physically very frail, though if given a chance for high spirits would still rise to an occasion. Mrs. John Cadwalader, a charming and distinguished life-long friend of hers though younger, went one afternoon to call on her. I had warned her that age was a forbidden subject in my sister's house. Mrs. Cadwalader's daughter, who was with her mother, gave me an



account of the visit. On their arrival, Agnes, who was dressed and sitting on a chair in her bedroom, decided that the bed gave her a better background, so quickly slipping on a becoming bed-sack over her frock, into bed she bounced. Mrs. Cadwalader, ushered into the room, was most sympathetic; so sorry her friend was unable to leave her bed; but not so sympathetic but that as soon as the greetings were over, she forgot my warnings and asked, "Agnes, how old are you?" Agnes: "Helen, what beautiful eyes you have." Mrs. Cadwalader: "Agnes, I do not wish to listen to your flattery of my eyes. I wish to know how old you are." Agnes: "Dear Helen, every time you ask me my age I shall tell you of your beautiful eyes."

AFTER this, much talk followed, Tyson hovering around, not quite approved of, I imagine, by Mrs. Cadwalader. Notwithstanding, the afternoon filled with intimate talk, passed off most agreeably. So agreeably that Agnes, when Mrs. Cadwalader was leaving, forgot her rôle of bed-ridden invalid and jumped out of bed—bed-sack over frock—and followed her guest to the top of the stairs, where as a good-bye suggestion she said, "Dear Helen, you should really have a Tyson." Pretty good for eighty-eight!

IN the eighties there was a disastrous fire in the middle of the night in the house of a neighbor, a few doors from where Agnes and Charlie lived in Philadelphia. The neighbor and his sister-in-law were burned to death. The wife, finding no escape, first



threw her two children from the third story window—one child being killed by the fall—then jumped to safety. Agnes, ill at the time, was carried down stairs through the suffocating smoke. This experience so terrified her that she persuaded Charlie to live in the country.

HE bought a place at Narberth, where he built a large house designed by the fashionable architects, Furness and Evans, but like others of that day, ornate and ugly, both house and furniture typically mid-Victorian. Agnes, however, was delighted with it, and the grounds were indeed lovely, Charlie showing much taste in the planting of the shrubberies and trees. There was a large, well-kept lawn; a charming wood on one side of the house, bordered by fine rhododendrons; an avenue of old trees leading from the road to the house; and—owing I rather think, to their recollection of lovely Butler Place—many orange, lemon and oleander trees surrounding the house during the spring and summer months. There was also a fine green-house and a large paddock for the horses. Tyson hunted for some years and had his own huntsman, pack of hounds and hunters. The place was called *Ardelege*, after an estate in England once owned by an ancestor of Charlie's.

THERE Agnes lived for more than thirty years, with butler, second man, coachman (later chauffeur), footman and many house-servants, mostly French, and outside servants to care for the place,—a large ménage

for three people. She entertained but little, and when she did it was usually a gathering of men, friends of Charlie's, for she didn't care much for women, but the entertainment was always given very elegantly.

To the servants she let it be understood that it was an honor to live with her, and they behaved accordingly. As an old woman, she was obliged to engage a new butler and had some difficulty in finding one who came up to her standards. Finally, an Englishman called Jones applied for the situation. She liked his appearance, she liked his manners, but how could she engage a servant who, during the few years he had spent in America, had only lived with some people of whom she had never heard—people who had made their money recently, and were therefore *common tradesmen*. But she discovered that in England he had lived with those whom she considered gentlefolk, and, as Jones seemed to know his place, she engaged him with the understanding that he was to forget that he had ever lived with such people as the *R's*, and only to remember that he was now living with Mrs. Chauncey. He stayed some years, and was often reminded that he was falling from his high position to the *R* standard. At last, and I think entirely on account of his past life with the *R's*, she dismissed a really excellent servant.

AGNES was very fond of her lovely home, and after my father's death, decided that of all the family's, hers was the only house worthy to hold the family

portraits. So, grand highway robber that she was, without right or reason, she took the portraits from the walls of Father's library and hung them at *Ardelege*. Being Agnes, no one but Moncure protested. He told her that the moment he heard she was drawing her last breath, he and Harvey, his farmer, would hitch the horses to the hay-wagon and race them from Paoli, where he lived, to Narberth and take the pictures. This at the time sounded very funny, but oh, how much trouble the portraits eventually caused. Not until five years after Agnes' death was the question settled as to whom they rightfully belonged.

AN odd thing happened quite often to Agnes. When a member of the family was dying or had died, she would hear three knocks on the door of the room. This first occurred when an older child died, while Agnes was a little girl in the nursery; later, when Moncure died at sea; and again when Edmund returned from Europe fatally ill. The last time the three knocks came it was not for a member of the family, but for a man-servant whom she had discharged the year before for being rude to her old French maid, Marie. One evening she was in her room, ready for bed, Marie having just left, when she heard the knocks. She opened the door and called Marie, but found she had not knocked. She called Charlie, she called Tyson, but neither had come to the door. Next morning word was brought her that



the body of her former butler had been found at her gate with a bullet through his brain.

THE time when he left the train at Narberth and walked to her house would have been the approximate hour when the three knocks had come to her door.

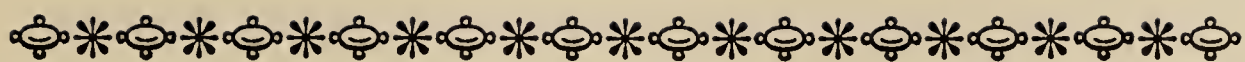
A ROBINSON funeral was always held in the house, and was a great event. There were seldom outsiders present. The large family of brothers, sisters, nieces and nephews rarely met except on these occasions, but when they did, the family interest in each other drew them close together, and of course their high spirits and sense of humor overcame the sadness of the moment. Agnes and Charlie Robinson were always the leaders.

MY nephew, Randolph Robinson, recalled an incident of his first family funeral. His Uncle Charlie walked up to him and very sternly and seriously said, "Randolph, I smell liquor on your breath." Randolph, feeling he had committed all of the seven deadly sins, was about to apologize, when Charlie added, "For God's sake, tell me where you got it."

WHEN Agnes' time came to go, Charlie had gone before, and alas, there were no ring-leaders. But I know she would have been gratified by her own funeral. So many of the younger generation were there, talking of her beauty, her charm, recalling and laughing at her wit, her gaiety; and there she lay in



a dainty white gown in the sunny window of her morning-room, surrounded by the splendid plants from her own green-house she was so proud of, as well as the beautiful flowers the young people had brought her; the servants who had lived with her twenty, thirty and fifty years passing one by one in front of the flower-filled coffin, saying their last good-byes while placing their wreaths at their mistress' feet. It was indeed the passing of a great lady.



## BEVERLEY: *The Doctor*

BEVERLEY, the fourth living child, was two years younger than Agnes. Mother said that often she feared Agnes' feelings would be hurt, for as a little boy he was so handsome and she so plain that strangers, seeing them together for the first time, would enthusiastically exclaim, "What a beautiful boy!" adding in a cold though polite voice, "A nice little girl." Later their positions were reversed.

BEVERLEY's early life was the ordinary one. First Dr. Farris' School in Philadelphia where whipping for misconduct was approved, and to him the switch was often applied; at fourteen, the University of Pennsylvania, class of 1862. Although rather a grouchy boy, he had qualities that made people care for him. He was a member of the Delta Psi and made many life-long friends, among them Greenough Platt, Charles Barclay, Persifor Frazer, Charles Coxe and John Cadwalader, all of Philadelphia; the last two, however, were the ones to whom he was most devoted. His great charm was his simplicity and moral fearlessness. He despised those who "had their ear to the ground."

THOUGH too young to enlist at the beginning of the Civil War, he was determined to serve in the Northern Army. When forbidden, he was only restrained from running away by Father's promise that if Pennsylvania were invaded he should join the army without opposition. So it came about in 1863 that he entered the First Regiment of Infantry, N. G. P., as a private, and was under fire at Carlisle, Hagerstown, Antietam and Gettysburg. It is reported of him in General Latta's history of the regiment, that in the Battle of Gettysburg, when there was a break in the ranks and much fear shown by the men; after Stuart Patterson's fingers had been shot off and other men wounded by bombs, Beverley said: "What the hell did you come here for if it was not for this?" John Ridgway, another friend, said to him later: "Bev, I think what we have been through was harder than Antietam."

To the end of his life he had great loyalty and love of country, and strongly resented the fact that a large family and little money prevented his taking part in the Spanish War in 1898. When the Great War came, another heartbreak came with it, for he was then too old to fight. He had a desire, even though he often modestly said he had done nothing to merit it, that when his time came the flag should be placed on his coffin; and when he died the flag was sent by the George Washington Post of the G. A. R., of which he was a member.

AFTER the Civil War he went to Paris to study medi-



cine, remaining there nine or ten years and becoming in appearance and manners very much the French student of the Latin Quarter. The medical students nicknamed him "Milord." Apart from his professional friends in Paris, the two men he saw and most often dined with were his father's friend, M. Michel Chevalier, the famous French engineer, and Mr. Charles Stewart, an uncle of Charles Stewart Parnell, well known Irish Statesman.

THOSE years in Paris were very happy, though spent in strenuous work. He was the first American to graduate from the University of Paris. Later he studied under Père Gosselin at the Pitie Hospital, and worked at the Hotel Dieu during the epidemic of cholera in the late sixties. At the beginning of the Franco-Prussian War he was studying German in Heidelberg and by some lucky chance was in Strasburg during the siege, which he seemed to have thoroughly enjoyed. On his return to Paris, after Sedan, he found the city terribly upset and often the scene of riots, with all the boulevards deserted, except for cabbies. One night, a single horseman came trotting slowly along. A cabby near Beverley shouted, "Look at him!"—pointing at the horseman—"A skeleton dancing on the waves of the sea." In his letters home, he spoke often of the starvation diet he was on and how he rejoiced when he was given even rats to eat.

AFTER the Commune, he was given the position of



interne at the St. Eugénie Hospital for children, where he served during a severe epidemic of diphtheria, writing his graduating thesis on it, for which he received honorable mention. Many years later, during the World War, he was one of six American physicians to receive the "Honorary Medal" from the Faculty of Medicine of Paris.

BEFORE returning to America he worked for some months at the University of London under Professor Sanderson and his colleague, Professor Schaffer, both distinguished scientists. While there he took up the study of the nose and throat under Sir Morell MacKenzie, the English physician who attended the Emperor Frederick of Germany during his last illness.

BEVERLEY was a small, slight man, physically so far from strong that Dr. Charles Da Costa, the eminent Philadelphia heart specialist of that day, was opposed to his following his profession. Notwithstanding, on the advice of the family physician, Dr. John Meigs, he started his medical career in New York shortly after his return to the United States.

IN character, Beverley was excitable, temperamental and quick to anger. He had a most infectious laugh and was very lovable, though he was also full of prejudices. He was down on the world of wealth, but he had much sympathy for the poor and ill, particularly for those in prison, who he considered were often treated with great injustice. Busy and tired as



DR. BEVERLEY ROBINSON

From a photograph



he often was, he visited the Tombs every week, and frequently went to see the prisoners in Sing Sing. Later he wrote an article on capital punishment, of such interest that for at least five years after his death many western colleges asked that reprints be sent them. In his early days he spent his summers at Newport, hoping to increase his winter New York practice. When he would see from his small office window on Bellevue Avenue some of his well-to-do patients driving past in their grand turn-outs, he would shake his fist at "those damned rich, who did not even pay their bills", and he was inclined to believe that many of them should be in the Tombs instead of his friends who were already there. Sometimes, I fear to his wife's disgust, he would give up wealthy patients, in spite of his need for money, because he despised their character. There was, however, one man among the rich whom he admired immensely, Cornelius Vanderbilt,—not because of his wealth but in spite of it.

BEVERLEY never cared for private practice, for he was too honest and too irritable to deal amiably with a trying patient. But he thoroughly enjoyed hospital work and teaching, and his boys—as he called his pupils—loved and honored him. Many of them in after years became distinguished in their profession. The fact that he was always himself, I imagine, was the characteristic which made him many friends and some enemies.

HE was Professor of Therapeutics at Bellevue Hos-

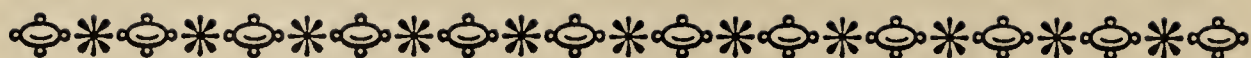


pital; and for over forty years, first attending and then consulting physician, at St. Luke's Hospital; consulting physician at the Charity Hospital on Blackwell's Island; and attending physician at the New York Hospital. He was a Founder of the Association of American Physicians, and President of the American Climatological Society. He also was among the first who advocated birth control, long before this became the thing to do. He was one of the first American physicians to specialize in the nose and throat, and had an international reputation as a medical authority.

MANY of his happiest hours were spent at the Century Club of New York, where he had most delightful contacts with the intellectual men of his day, several of whom were his personal friends, such as William Cary Brownell of Scribners, Paul Bartlett the sculptor, and J. Alden Weir the artist.

BEVERLEY married Anna Foster of New York; in character, a noble woman; in appearance, a very handsome one. His was the first family wedding I was old enough to go to. In the same street where the reception was held there was another wedding reception and our carriage stopped at that house instead of ours. Mother, holding me by the hand, walked into the drawing-room, embraced the bride—she had only seen Anna once or twice before—and then turned to kiss her son. With horror in her eye she saw a stranger; with terror in her voice she said, "You are not Beverley. Where is he?"

HE was the father of five children and lived in New York until his death at the age of eighty. The distinguished young lawyer, Beverley Randolph Robinson, partner in the law firm of Milbank, Tweed & Hope, was his eldest child.



## CHARLIE: *The Dilettante*

CHARLIE would often remind Mother in a rather disgruntled tone, as if it was her fault, that he was born on the coldest September 1st ever recorded, and that Ben had the greatest difficulty in making the house warm enough for him to be kept comfortable. He was the only one of my five brothers whom I really knew. Our friendship began when I was five, learning my letters at Mercy Brown's Quaker Infants' School at Juniper and Walnut Streets, and he, a young law student, would sometimes be sent to bring me home. Though with few pennies in his pocket, he would often treat me to a brick of what was called Harlequin ice-cream because of its many colors, which was sold at a small shop near the school. How I adored him, and the ice-cream!

HE was named Charles Meigs Robinson, after the family physician who brought us—or most of us—into the world. When Dr. Charles Meigs died, his son John took his place in my parents' household and affection.

CHARLIE ROBINSON, man-grown, was over six feet, a superb figure, with a fine carriage; his face, though



CHARLES MEIGS ROBINSON

From a photograph





not handsome, was pleasing, and he was a splendid specimen of vigorous health and distinguished appearance. He was always well turned out, and in New York, many would turn with admiration to look after him as he walked on Fifth Avenue. He was very gay, and well up on the affairs of the hour. In character he was nervous, sensitive, quick to anger, impatient of those who bored him—and he was easily bored—but very generous and unselfish to those he cared for.

I ALWAYS think of Charlie as the perfect gentleman and thorough man of the world; a delightful companion, cultivated, witty and original. His friends of years were Miss Elizabeth Marbury and Miss Elsie de Wolfe, and he was often at their Sunday Recitals where one met any and everyone; also at Miss Callendar's Musicals, and Miss Carola de Forest's, and at the Christmas Eve parties of the James Speyers. Mrs. Speyer had been among his earliest friends when he went as a lad of twenty to live in New York.

HE was not understood by his father, who worried over his interest and love for music, and felt that his playing by ear on the piano was effeminate and would lead to no good. So he tried to make a lawyer out of a musician and failed. How well I remember that while Charlie was trying to read law, the least noise would upset him, and he would bribe the younger children to keep quiet.

As small boys, Charlie and Moncure, a few years his

junior, always quarrelled. Charlie, mischievous and a great tease, was always playing tricks on much more serious Moncure, such as putting his fingers in Moncure's food or hiding things he valued. The latter, enraged, would often fly at Charlie, knife or hatchet in hand, chase him up a tree, and then sit beneath it, threatening to kill him when he came down. There Charlie would be forced to stay until old Ben or someone would divert Moncure, and he could flee to the house for protection. Of course, as the boys grew older this dangerous quarrelling ceased, though they never cared for each other. Moncure, a good sport and splendid rider, with no interest in music or literature, despised his artistic and musical older brother, considering him a coward and a milk-sop.

NATURALLY, with no sympathy from his father and scorned by his younger brother, Charlie was not happy in Philadelphia, and when, at twenty years of age, his father decided to send him to New York to enter a banking firm and live with his doctor brother, then unmarried, he was a very joyful young man. He thoroughly enjoyed New York, the music, the theatres, and the gay social life of the seventies, and being agreeable and attractive was much sought after.

HE never married, and my mother often worried at his having no wife who would look after him when she died; for he was always catching something. A winter seldom passed that she did not spend weeks in



New York, nursing him through diphtheria, typhoid or scarlet fever. After Beverley married, Charlie, who by that time had become intimate with Frederick H. Baldwin, another popular bachelor, decided to take apartments in the same building with him, and this arrangement lasted for many years. As they grew older and better off, their summers would be spent in Europe, Newport or Bar Harbor. As they had much the same tastes, and many friends in common, they were sympathetic and companionable.

CHARLIE and FREDDY, particularly Charlie, always had a protégé, an unfortunate man or woman for whom they made life easier. Unfortunately when nearly seventy years of age, while staying in the house which he had practically bought for his last protégé, Charlie had a slight paralytic stroke, slowly followed by others. From that time, until his death some years later, the protégé took care of him; and though Charlie tried two or three times to break away, he was always overruled. In the end Charlie became estranged, not only from Freddy Baldwin and Beverley, but also from other members of the family to whom he had always been devoted.

CHARLIE, though irritated by small things that displeased him, was enthusiastic even over trifles that appealed to his fancy. I remember at my coming-out tea, he saw me talking for some time with two old people. A few days later he sent me a fan from New York, writing how happy it made him to see me, not



thinking about my own pleasure but, as he expressed it, "giving those boring old people a good time." There were many things he considered unworthy of the well-born—lack of consideration of others, egotism, buying what one could not pay for, affectation, bad manners, and rudeness to servants and inferiors.

IN the years after my coming out, my parents had three sons in New York, two of them with wives and children, and they would go there once or twice a year for a week or more at a time, taking some of their Philadelphia children with them. They would stay at the old Brevoort, near Washington Square, or the Albemarle, about 23rd Street and Fifth Avenue. My father always had the meals served in his private parlor—he thought a public dining-room was not the proper place for a gentleman's wife—but to please his modern New York children, he would invite them, once or twice during the visit, to dine at Delmonico's or the then almost equally fashionable restaurant, the Brunswick.

THESE annual visits to New York were the great events in my life. My interest in the theatre began when, as a child with Charlie, we went to see the excellent actors and actresses of that day, and I listened to his intelligent criticism of the play and the acting. He was not only an enthusiastic, but a most instructive companion. Charlotte Cushman, Modjeska, Janauschek, Sarah Bernhardt, Joseph Jefferson, Edwin Booth, and later Eleanora Duse, were

the important actors and actresses. Among the less great, the very charming George Rignold as Henry V particularly delighted us. How splendid I thought him: such a gallant King and charming lover! Then there were Ada Dyas and handsome Harry Montague—truly a *matinée* idol.

AGNES lost her heart to him, and for some days after seeing *The Romance of a Poor Young Man*, she talked of nothing else. On her return to Philadelphia, she received his photograph, on the back of which was written: "Have just found out whose were the eyes so inspired me on election night. They shall go back to London deep down in the heart of Harry Montague." For weeks Agnes kept the photograph on her dressing-table, but at last she discovered, much to her disappointment, that the real sender was not Montague but Charlie.

LATER came Irving and Terry. What a happy recollection I have of Ellen Terry, as I first saw her in *The Merchant of Venice*. The first act opened, as I remember it, with Portia, clad in an exquisite gown of yellow brocade, seated on a small sofa with a lovely piece of blue brocade behind her back. Shall one who saw her in those days, and listened to the magic of her voice, ever forget her beauty and charm? And did anyone, before or since, ever walk with such lightness and grace? I saw her for the last time in London in 1913, on the opening night of Shaw's *Androcles and the Lion*. She was in the audience, and I watched with

adoration and admiration, even though she was an old woman, that grand walk of hers as she passed down the aisle of the theater to her motor.

ABOUT 1884, when Irving and Terry were, I think, first in this country, we also had the Daly Company to entertain us, with John Drew, Ada Rehan, Fisher and Mrs. Gilbert. How delightful their light comedies were! Perhaps some of my readers may remember *The Boomerang*. Many years later, when John Drew was playing in Langdon Mitchell's dramatization of *Pendennis*, I sat by him at luncheon. For a time we discussed his former and present plays, and I asked which of his parts pleased him the most, telling him I knew the one which appealed most to me. We decided to write the name of the character on our individual lunch cards, and later discuss their merits. On both cards were written *Petruchio*.

CHARLIE was even more devoted to music than to the theater, and he sometimes took me to concerts and to the opera. I cared at that time little for either, but the first winter *Parsifal* was sung in New York and created such enthusiasm, he insisted I must come as his guest to hear it. His ardor thrilled me more than the music, but he was optimistic and told me that some day I would care for Wagner and all good music, and he was quite right.

How good he was to me. In my hard-up days he would bring me some lovely clothes from Europe.



And many a fat check he would, half crossly, push into my hands, fearing to be thanked, and how opportune they were in educating my two boys. Somehow, he always seemed to know when I needed help and sympathy. A hard time for me was the day I left my eldest son, Philip, at Groton,—the first break in the household. But Charlie understood and had me meet him in Boston, where I spent such a delightful week that I was cheered and comforted.

ONE of the happiest times I ever had, though I was far from young, was the summer of 1912, when I spent a few weeks with him and his friend, Freddy Baldwin, at the Gregoire at Bar Harbor. He provided a charming apartment for my maid, Lizzie, and myself; filling my small drawing-room daily with fresh flowers. There were many parties given in my honor by Charlie, Freddy and their friends; and I know he was repaid by my visit, for he wrote to a mutual friend, "Nathalie is here. I am so happy. I feel thirty again, showing off my bride."

ONE amusing thing happened which delighted him. A very rich and elderly widower, after sending many floral offerings and dining and wining me, sought out Freddy Baldwin by way of sounding him in regard to Charlie's feelings, for he said the latter was so peculiar he wished advice as to how to approach him. He told Freddy, that after many years he had at last found the lady he felt would grace the head of his table, and did Freddy think that Charlie would be



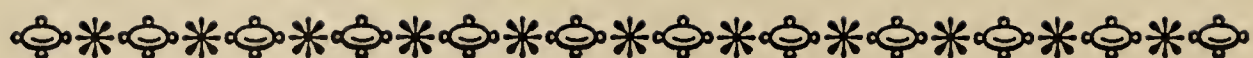
willing to have him pay his addresses to his sister. Freddy was thrilled, but alas, had to confess that I had a much-alive husband camping in the Adirondacks.

As I look back to the New York of the seventies and eighties, what a charming picture I see. The broad highway, Fifth Avenue, with splendid houses on either side; fine equipages, many a gorgeous coach with four prancing horses; and on the top, well turned out men in high hats; and beautiful and beautifully-gowned women, driving from Washington Square through Central Park; with the sidewalks equally interesting and gay. Perhaps one coach would go by with handsome Mrs. Burke Roche on the box, or some other equally lovely New York woman. I shut my eyes and see old Mrs. John Jay, waving plumes in her bonnet, sitting back in her old-fashioned barouche; two men on the box; with her grandson, my brother Edmund's boy—that curly-haired young god—Moncure Robinson, beside her. Though dead some years, the older maids at the Opera House still speak of what a fine looking, distinguished young gentleman he was in an opera box.

How splendid it all was, and what gorgeous women! Small wonder that so many men of title started the fashion of taking them from us. Jane Campbell, who became the Princess San Faustino, was an intimate friend of Charlie's. There was Adele Grant, who became the Countess of Essex; the very clever Miss Stevens, later Lady Paget; beautiful Jenny Jerome,

Lady Randolph Churchill, who made her name so famous in England; and later Mary Leiter, the first wife of Lord Curzon. Then there were the magnificent and never-to-be-forgotten balls, given by such hosts as the William K. Vanderbilts—whose daughter Consuelo became the Duchess of Marlborough; the Bradley Martins; the William C. Whitneys; the Whitelaw Reids; Mrs. William Astor; and Mrs. Ogden Mills; each entertainment seeming to surpass the other in beauty and grandeur.

How much dignity and grace seem to have been taken out of life with the substitution of hurry for leisure, motors for horses, and cocktails for Madeira wine. Yet I am sure that the aristocratic tradition of former days has not entirely disappeared and is still with us, even if in different garments.



## MONCURE: *The Sportsman*

A FEW days after Moncure's birth, the monthly nurse, who had attended Mother at the coming of her other children, died suddenly and trouble seemed ahead. But her place was filled by a pretty, rosy-faced, young Englishwoman—Mrs. Harriet Shaw—who had been sent to my father with a letter from a friend of his, a Mr. Minnett of London. Mrs. Shaw had served some years in a London hospital, and was recommended not only for her ability and faithfulness as a nurse, but her fine and courageous character. Her story is an interesting one, and as she lived in our household, off and on, for fifty or sixty years, I shall tell it.

NANA, as all the younger children called her, was the daughter of an English farmer, and very pretty. She fell in love with a gentleman's gentleman, and married him. After a few months she discovered he had another wife; she was horrified and felt disgraced. Without a word she left him, taking her clothing and the little money she had, ashamed to let even her family know of her trouble, or that a baby was on its way. After many unsuccessful efforts to find work—her money almost gone—she offered her services to a



London hospital, with the understanding that they would care for her and her baby when it came. On hearing her story and learning of her faithful and untiring work, Mr. Minnett, President of the hospital, became interested. Just before the Indian Mutiny in 1857, Mr. Minnett was sent to India on some important mission; and as this was just after her son's birth, he took Mrs. Shaw with him and his wife, in case of illness, leaving the small Louis in the care of the hospital.

ON returning from India, Nana so feared a chance meeting with her gentleman's gentleman that she decided to come to America, leaving her son in England until she had earned enough money to make a home for him here. With Mr. Minnett's letter to my father, Mother and Moncure became her first patients. Dr. Charles Meigs, finding her such a competent nurse, shortly gave her plenty of work, and before long she became the fashionable nurse in Philadelphia and even in New York. There, her most ambitious case was the bringing into the world of the famous triplets of a prominently social lady. Later, these triplets became three beautiful women; and I think are still alive, and likely grandmothers. During her leisure time Mrs. Shaw made her home at my parents' house; and when she sent to England for her son, he was brought up in the nursery with my parents' children.

EVEN as a small child, Moncure had a great interest in dogs and particularly in horses; when out of sight



one had only to go to the stable to find him. In later years, Father would tell with great amusement how, on hearing one day that small Moncure was running in and out of the horses' stalls, he feared they would kick him; and so sent word that he must return to the house. Time passed and no Moncure. Unused to disobedience, Father sent word that if he did not return at once he, himself, would come and fetch him. Moncure, undaunted, sent back word that if his father came he would set the dogs on him. I do not remember the end of the story—but Father didn't like dogs.

I do know, however, that many of this son's qualities appealed to him: there was understanding and much affection between them. Father felt that some day Moncure would become a very able man; for he was intelligent, hardworking, and energetic, standing well in his school and college classes. But this was not to be. One evening when he was seventeen, Father was speaking of "The spacious firmament on high," and the myriads of uncountable stars. Moncure said, "Why uncountable? I can count them," which he proceeded to do, with the result that an oculist was called in, and discovered that Moncure's sight was so bad that he must be taken from college at once; all reading forbidden; and an out-door life prescribed. At that time ranch life was beginning, and Moncure begged to be sent West. But, alas, he was the only son at home, and western life a new and strange adventure. The thought of parting with this youngest son was impossible, for Father was an old man and

needed him. If the boy stayed in Philadelphia he should have the fastest trotting horse that could be found, and an allowance of a thousand dollars a year, which, sixty odd years ago and more, was a large amount of money for a boy of seventeen to spend while living at home.

So this over-grown active boy, almost blind and no doubt unhappy, gave way to his father's persuasions and remained in Philadelphia; his only duty, to be at home two or three evenings a week, when a tutor came to read history to him; and during the day, occasionally to copy his father's letters in a copying press. So he had little outlet for his super-abundant vitality except driving; sleighing during the winter; and hunting, racing, gambling, betting—not the best education for a boy of seventeen.

MONCURE was a splendid and fearless rider: in a race usually the winner, no matter what horse he rode. At the Ambler Country Fair, which was held near our home at Penllyn, he would take the *Old Dun*—and a strange beast he was—out of the plow on the farm, put a saddle on his back and win the jumping race. In appearance Moncure was fairly good looking: over six feet tall, attractive enough for women to flatter and spoil, and popular among men. He was a member of The Philadelphia Club; The Rabbit; the City Troop; and, at one time, the youngest member of the Rose Tree Hunt, much beloved by the older members, who admired daring riding and courage. There



still exists the legend, that in the autumn on moonlight nights, between Media and Paoli, Moncure may be seen, riding at furious pace on the old dun horse, jumping impossible fences.

IN character he was a strange mixture of kindness and brutality; of much sentiment and appalling vanity; in gentle moods, a lover of flowers, and most intelligent in the cultivation of them. He was in his own way a most obedient and good son, ever thoughtful of his mother's fears and old-time prejudices, and of his father's wishes. When sleighing and racing through the Park on winter nights, knowing that Mother would not sleep until he came home, he would return early to Spruce Street, call to her that he was home, and that she could go to bed. Then, quietly putting another horse in the sleigh, of which she knew nothing, he would go out again to rejoin his companions in the Park.

MOTHER also thought it wrong to play cards on Sunday and asked Moncure not to, which as far as I know he never did. Father always insisted on his family being at morning prayers, and Moncure was practically always there. Often he only reached the house at prayer time, but he would rush up to his room, cover over whatever he had on with his dressing-gown, and be in the library among the first.

ONE evening in Baltimore after some race meet, a bet went around among the men who were supping



MONCURE ROBINSON, JR.

In fatigue uniform of First Troop Philadelphia City Cavalry





together, that Moncure and his friend, Dr. Rush Huidekoper, should race just past the toll gate on the main road; and whoever got there first should win a good size purse. The race started, Moncure ahead; but when he reached the gate he found it unexpectedly closed for the night. His horse balked and Moncure was thrown over the gate. He broke his leg badly, but with his usual luck, he landed on the far side, and they decided that he was the winner of the race.

As time went on, Father deplored this racing life for the boy, now a man grown, and indeed forbade it. But Moncure's ambition to ride a race on the Pimlico track near Baltimore was about to be fulfilled, and he took the risk of disobeying his father. When his telegram came, "Have won at Pimlico," how was Father to be told? Someone took him the telegram, the various members of the family trembling outside his door, wondering how he would take it. To everyone's surprise he came out smiling. He loved success, and Moncure's had made him forget the disobedience.

At twenty-five, Moncure married handsome Lydia Biddle. They bought the old Biddle place at Paoli, which had belonged to Lydia's grandfather, Thomas Biddle, and is still owned by their only child, Mona.

A RATHER curious coincidence happened a year or two ago. Glancing through the death notices in a paper, I saw that a certain elderly woman was to be

buried from the home of her grandson, Moncure Robinson. As the name, Moncure, except in the South, is unknown, I was startled and curious, particularly with the surname of Robinson.

A LITTLE later, I wrote to this Moncure Robinson and asked how he came by his name. He called me on the telephone and told me his Grandfather Robinson, a veterinary, had known and admired a neighbor with the same last name as his own and the first name of Moncure. On the day of this neighbor's death his grandson, the man I was talking with, was born, and the name of Moncure was given him by his grandfather. It finally came out that on the table beside him was my brother Moncure's photograph in his City Troop uniform.

To add to this strange tale, the day Moncure's wife died, Mr. Robinson's own wife gave birth to their first daughter, to whom he had given the name of Lydia.



## FANNY: *The Enigma*

FANNY, the tenth child,—how best describe this strange, elusive, fascinating creature? She seemed a nymph, a dryad, a wild thing caught in the woods. For me to tell of her beauty seems so impossible that I must quote from a friend who, though knowing her slightly, has the following recollection of my sister's appearance in her youth:

“WHEN I think of the really beautiful women that I have seen or known, I think of Fanny Robinson as standing at the head of the list. It was the sense of beauty which she conveyed, rather than actual symmetry of line or richness of color, although she had a great beauty of these which made her what she was. There never was such a lovely brow,—quite oval, and melting into dusky, brown hair which curled in some crisp, but soft fashion about it, and with eye-brows of a most perfect arch, powerful but fairly penciled. To me her brow was the great charm of her face, although her teeth, too, were perfect. Her coloring was not startling; a finely textured and rich cream complexion with a tint of dark rose. No one could describe her without saying that her face was a short and broad oval, and that her mouth was very large for it. It has



often come to my mind what Bacon said,—that there never had existed great physical beauty without some singularity. But there were classic rules kept in her proportions. Her exquisitely small head was set on a slender, round neck, which sprang from glorious shoulders, wide and full, which tapered in turn to a small waist and long, slim legs. She was nearer five feet ten than five feet eight. But beauty is a thing as a whole, and what I started out to say was that her appearance suggested beauty, most particularly it suggested romance, and romance allied to elegance and aristocracy. She was something remote and withdrawing, aloof and unaware of most passersby, no matter how much they looked or how eager they were to break through the magic circle she had drawn around herself. As I finish you can easily see that the beauty I saw in her has been as a remembrance for me ‘a joy forever’.”

IN this true and charming description one feature has been forgotten, her exquisite star-like eyes often reminding one of a startled fawn. Dr. Owen Wister affectionately suggested if one looked closely at Fanny’s head, he would surely find pointed ears with fur behind them.

AND now her character. Being so near her age, and as I grew older seeing little of her, likely my vision is blurred, for I never understood her and I doubt if anyone ever did. To me she seemed to live in a world of her own and to take small interest in this

one. When she was obliged to come down to earth, though perhaps unaware of it, she seemed play-acting, her real self hidden. If I am right, this will account for her indifference to those most devoted and nearest to her, which made them feel she wished nothing from them. Though at times she was startlingly thoughtful and generous, particularly where money was concerned, and she had little of it, she was more generous with it than with herself. Though no doubt capable of pouring herself out to her husband with passion, she was cold to the rest of the world. She was at her best and less shy and self-conscious with strangers, and was pleased by their interest and admiration.

NOTWITHSTANDING this aloofness, she had warm admirers who were satisfied with what she gave them. Among old letters from these devoted friends I find tender and loving passages, and glimpses of her life and the effect she had on the few people who came her way. The following letters from Mrs. Davidge, the eldest daughter of Bishop Henry Codman Potter of New York and a friend of hers from early girlhood, show this plainly. They are undated but were evidently written after Fanny became a widow.

THURSDAY EVENING.

DARLING FANNY:

I only took and did not give! But I needed it so much and I am such a re-created being. It is one of my most wonderful glimpses of you. It must be the sense of your victorious accomplishment. It certainly conveyed new life. You had a great big thing to do, and now it is done, and you are like a lovely warm sun after it has grown

its crops. For the boys *are* done. You may see things in the too-close perspective that must be yours, that you think could be bettered. But if their spirits, like yours are all open and wide, free for all good winds to blow in, all good influences, all good seeds, is it not grander than having a tight, hard, diamond-polish, fixed finish? They seem to me all filled with warmth, sun-sweetened, so kind and so clear of sight. I hope I am not beguiled by them because they were sweet to me!

But *you*—serene high priestess—be glad for others of all you are.

Your loving and grateful,

CLARA S. DAVIDGE.

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62 SOUTH WASHINGTON SQUARE  
APRIL 26TH.

MY DARLING FANNY:

I was in the drawing-room just now, when out of the Lord's Open, in walks Mr. Henry James. He came to see Mrs. Elliott in the top of the house, and was shown into my dressing-room while he sent up a message. So I just told him I was not a bit of harm, and offered him tea, and told him of my thread-like film of a tie to his brother, and we began right in the middle. Of course I said at once that I had been so glad for you, whom I so loved, to have had the pleasure of that stay this year at Mrs. Wister's. He disclaimed at once all power of giving pleasure to you, but he began instantly to talk about you. I must have given him some sense of confidence or else of love for you, for he said you were the "most elusive" of all creatures, and that while you made it so impossible for any exact touch to be laid upon you, you yourself were not a participant in the elusiveness. These are not the exact words, I was not used to his rush of words of course. I said yes, but you were utterly unconscious, and then he said practically that that was what



he had already just said of you. Of course then I had to tell him what you were to me, and why. Really we only had seven minutes, but when Mrs. Elliott sent for him he said "Good-bye for the present," and I adored that he had so loved you. I write you this because you would hate me to be a discredit to you, and I do hope I was not.

He wanted to know about the boys, and I told him how they were Heaven's own imps, and how wonderful, and he said he could not think of common-place boys and you at all.

I wonder he could even think the words.

Your

C. S. D.

THE following extracts have been taken from the voluminous correspondence of the elder Mrs. Owen Wister, an affectionate and devoted friend, though many years Fanny's senior.

BUTLER PLACE

PHILADELPHIA.

DEAREST FRANCES,

When anyone whom I love loves me, I like them to tell me so, and you know I love you, my little dove. Your note came as I was addressing the parcel to you on Tuesday, and five minutes afterwards I started on my silver wedding trip, from which I got back last evening.

. . . Here is your dear and pretty mare, I hope in no worse case than she came to me. It is likely that I have given her some bad tricks with her mouth but she is so intelligent that she will soon unlearn them in proper hands. I have grown very fond of her and I send her back with much regret and with the heartiest thanks to you for the great favour and kindness of letting me have her. I am glad you were glad to see me after I came the other day; I am always afraid of your caprices.

I tell you seriously, if you were to cease to care for me after making yourself so dear to me I should never get over it.

And a line to a friend in Rome about Fanny:

DEAREST PAT,

This line, if it reaches you at all, will do so by the hands of my great friends, Mr. & Mrs. Sydney Biddle. I am much attached to him, but she and Frances Lockwood are the two human creatures whom I love most tenderly. Do, if she is up to it, show her the Boschetto.

Yours faithfully,

S. B. W.

Then a charming letter to Fanny herself from Switzerland, dated July, 1883.

DEAREST FRANCES,

How good of you to write and how glad I was of news of you from yourself. You dear, delightful child, I wish I could hug you this minute. You can't think how pleased I am at your being at Mt. Desert, and with your account of the pine house in the piney woods. I know of your flirtation with Mr. Harry Ingersoll from Dr. Wister, but be careful, he is very *volage*. My husband, after writing me a most complimentary description of "your buster," as you call him (which, by the way, Agnes Irwin did too, adding, "your Frances makes a most lovely young mother"), told me in a subsequent letter that you looked thin and tired, and that "the infernal baby is evidently draining her life-blood." You must forgive him the strong language for the sake of the affection it proves.

Your story about Mrs. Frederick Mason is capital, especially her comment on your bashfulness. You know you are *sham* shy, which gives you great advantages and is a great snare to other people.



FRANCES BIDDLE WITH MONCURE BIDDLE  
Enlarged from a tintype





Last of all, a letter written to Fanny, when she was spending the winter in Cambridge, some years after her husband's death, to be near Miss Agnes Irwin:

. . . You know my reading of the patterns of things laid up in Heaven: I believe that perfection of character, of relations, of fulfillment is there, here we are striving after the models seen through a glass darkly. You are not wise, you never will be like people in general, you can't see things as they are, nor cause and effect even when you have tested them innumerable times. I think it desperately hard for you that this should be, but you are so many other things, so different, so transcendent in grace and quality, so refined from alloy, that you can give and be something so far above and beyond what others can, and you must take this for your portion and be content. I don't mean to discourage you in your attempts in which you are right, but to try to guard you against disappointment. Your boys will adore you more and more as they grow to manhood.

I hope you will not find it too cold in Cambridge; your description of your lodgings is pleasant, and as you know, when spring comes at last to Cambridge (and I think it comes to the poles first) it has great charm. I shall trust to hear that you are seeing people who interest you. I do wish you could know the Willy Jameses; Mr. Goodwin is a delightful being too. I'm afraid if you meet my friend Judge Holmes that he will like you so much you won't like him at all.

I must stop short.

Yours faithfully,

S. B. W.

NOTWITHSTANDING the dream-land that I felt she lived in, Fanny's feet were firmly on the ground, for she had a clear business mind, and was very intelligent about practical affairs. Although as a girl never

strong, she was a good and fearless horsewoman, but after a bad tumble, although she recovered in time, she never was very well.

IN her youth she was anxious for a broad and intellectual education. Father was so much interested in her mental development that when she asked him to allow her to go to a certain advanced French boarding school in New York he gladly gave his consent, and on leaving school he sent her, with her brother Moncure, to spend eight or nine months in Europe under the tutelage of Miss Agnes Irwin, that charming and gifted woman, Philadelphia's distinguished school-mistress, who later became the first Dean of Radcliffe College. In the seventies it was a little unusual in Philadelphia for young ladies to be sent away from home to French boarding schools or to Europe to polish off their educations.

WHILE in Paris, Fanny met Sydney Biddle, the son of my father's friend, Mr. George W. Biddle, the eminent Philadelphia lawyer. Sydney was not only a handsome and distinguished gentleman, but a romantic and interesting figure as well. He had travelled much in Europe, spoke German and French, and had had many intellectual advantages which did not often come the way of the young man of that time. He had seen the best picture galleries of Europe, and had brought home a fine collection of photographs from them. He had heard and seemed to appreciate that new and strange music of the German musician,



Wagner. His older friends were among the intellectuals whom Philadelphia at that time possessed: Mrs. Caspar Wistar; Mrs. Owen Wister; Dr. Furness, the great Shakespearean scholar; Mrs. Gillespie; Dr. Weir Mitchell and the Irwins.

FANNY and he evidently had a glorious and exciting time together in Paris, and on Fanny's return to America his attentions continued. They were very different from those of her other admirers. He would send her photographs of paintings and buildings they had seen and enjoyed together, the works of Victor Hugo, de Musset, and other foreign authors, thus pleasantly flattering her mentality, which gratified her very much. No ordinary flowers would come from him, but often Cape Jasmine or rare orchids would be sent, which recalls a joke that I played on Fanny.

THE summer after her return from Europe, Sydney was sailing for Spain and their "good-byes" had been said. The next day I saw some flowers of the ordinary onion in the vegetable garden, and if you have ever seen them you will know how orchid-like they look. I picked a large bunch and sent them to her in a florist's box, with one of Sydney's cards. She was thrilled, as she told me, by their unusual beauty, and I doubt if my joke was ever discovered.

ON his return, Sydney asked Fanny to marry him. She told him she was not yet sure of herself. He must

give her six months in which to make up her mind, and during that time she would not see him. He agreed, and for three months they kept the bargain. Then Mrs. Wister wrote Fanny that she had no right to keep Sydney waiting so long; he was looking ill and unhappy, and as he was staying at Butler Place the kindest thing would be for Fanny to come at once and tell him her decision. On arriving, Fanny walked into the library and found Sydney on the far side of a center table. When she reached the near side she gave him the answer he had so longed for, and a few months later they were married.

ON returning to the house after the marriage ceremony, Fanny went straight to her room, refusing to see the guests at the reception, and continued the French novel she had been reading until time to leave on her wedding journey.

SYDNEY and FANNY spent their first winter in an apartment at Tenth and Walnut Streets, but the following year they moved into a house on Spruce Street. Fanny took much interest in the furnishing of it, and there for several winters they led a gay and social life, entertaining and being entertained. Sydney, a brilliant man, was forging ahead, and was spoken of as the coming lawyer. He was busy and often very tired, his ability and ambition driving him to work beyond his strength. Four babies came rapidly, and on their account as well as Sydney's they moved to the near-by country to live. But the change from Philadelphia

was not as beneficial to Sydney as had been hoped, and at the end of a few years he died. He left Fanny, a little over thirty, as beautiful as when they were married twelve years earlier, with four little boys under ten to bring up.

OH, the pity of it. At the time of his death she was silent for many hours, tearless and distraught, pacing and pacing up and down the room. Finally she asked me to fetch Cecelia Beaux, the artist. She wished her to sketch Sydney's head as he lay on his death-bed. The picture was never shown me or referred to between us, and since that day, nearly fifty years ago, I have never heard her but once speak Sydney's name.

HER husband's death was a particular tragedy for one of her nature, and from that time she gradually cut herself off from friends and family. Occasionally some elderly woman would fall a victim to her charms, and her admiration would please Fanny for a time, then she would tire of it and quietly remove herself.

PERHAPS she was not strong and the noise of her little boys exhausted her, perhaps she was too unhappy, but I felt she never had the real and foolish joy in her children that other mothers have. But she gave their upbringing, both mental and physical, great thought and care. She made many sacrifices for them and owing, no doubt, in great measure to her untiring and intelligent efforts on their behalf, they have become four exceptionally able men. For during all



those long, lonely years she lived after Sydney's death, one thought and one duty obsessed her—to bring up his children and make them into the type of men he would have desired. If she failed, and often she feared she had, what did her great love for him amount to, and how could she meet him in the world beyond, as she so firmly believed she would?

BUT the last few years of her life were happy, for her work had been finished and well done, and she could afford to wait happily for the end to come. Each of her sons in their individual professions were successful: Moncure, a banker; George, an artist of renown; Francis, an able and brilliant lawyer; Sydney, the doctor, a promising psychoanalyst; and all of them honorable, high-toned gentlemen as their father had been before them.

## CHAPTER III

### ME : Myself





## CHAPTER III

### ME : Myself



I, THE afterthought, was the eleventh and last child of my parents, and from the first a disappointment, since a boy had been hoped for, to be called after my father's dear friend, Nathaniel Chauncey. Now what could be done? Agnes came to the rescue. Why not call the baby "Nathalie," after the popular Russian novel of the day? Father was willing, and Mr. Chauncey showed his appreciation by sending the "afterthought" a small silver dinner service. The following was my father's acceptance of the gift:

MY DEAR CHAUNCEY,

It was a great pleasure to Mrs. Robinson and myself to give your beloved name to our little daughter, but it is even a greater one to find that this tribute to our long friendship, one that has never experienced during nearly thirty-seven years a day of abatement or a moment of doubt, has been an agreeable one to you. As evidence of this affection, your note of yesterday will be treasured by Mrs. Robinson and myself as a precious possession, to be handed to our little daughter in after years, and to

be preserved by her as a memorial even more precious than the beautiful gifts which accompanied it.

Miss Nathalie Chauncey certainly enters this changing world most largely provided for. She has already received from Mr. Savage a beautiful knife, fork, spoon and napkin-holder for her early years, and now she has from you everything which even a young princess could desire for the service of her meals at a more advanced period. Verily, if she is not a spoilt little girl, it will be due to Mrs. Robinson's watchfulness, for you will certainly have placed some temptation in the way of her vanity and pride.

I have a superstition, however, my dear Chauncey, that a daughter of Mrs. Robinson who bears your honoured and beloved name, must enter life under favorable auspices, and the blessing of Heaven will, I trust, bear well for whom your prayers are offered.

Mrs. Robinson desires to be united with me in affectionate remembrances to you; and I remain your most valued friend.

Ever yours,

MONCURE ROBINSON.

WHEN I received my name, my southern mother would not allow a northern clergyman to give it to me, so I was taken to Washington, for Bishop Wilmer—a friend of my parents' and the father, I think, of the celebrated oculist—to baptize me.

I NEVER remember my parents except as old people. My mother, though never old in spirit, was frail and delicate. She always wore in the house a cap and shawl, and even as patroness of the Assembly or any other ball, a high dress. Her evening costume at home was a black corded silk with a black lace shawl, and



NATHALIE ROBINSON BOYER

From a photograph





for full dress a black velvet with a long train and a white point lace shawl, cuffs, collar and cap. Her only ornament, a small star-shaped pin of rubies and emeralds, fastened her lace collar.

My father, tall, slight, white-haired and a little stooping, was always exquisitely neat in his long frock-coat, gray trousers, black cravat and collar so high it was almost a stock. As a young child I have but one recollection of him. In the morning while he was dressing I would be taken by my nurse to his room, seat myself in his large arm-chair with its back to the window, and at his request repeat Mother Goose rhymes, always ending with the story of the Three Little Pigs. When the end came I would sadly tell about the wicked wolf,—how “He’d huff and he’d puff till he blew the house down, and ate up the poor Little Pig.” Father, laughing heartily, would applaud, and then came my reward. “Some chocolate for my tiny pig,” he would say, and off I would go to the nursery.

THEREBY hangs the tale of my first remembered lie. My teeth had scallops on the edge of them. A day came when the chocolate was left out, and proved too strong a temptation. I took a huge bite. The following morning, when asked if I were guilty, I promptly answered, “No,” but the scallops on the chocolate convicted me. Poor “tiny pig.”

AMONG others of my father’s devoted friends who were kind to the “afterthought” was Mr. Henry

Seybert. Two or three times each year he would invite me to meet him at Schwartz's, the toy shop, with my nurse, to choose a gift for myself. On looking back I blush, for I always selected the largest and most expensive toy in the shop. I hope this seeming graft was at the suggestion of the nurse.

MR. HENRY SEYBERT was the son of Mr. Adam Seybert of Philadelphia, an important chemist and mineralogist. Both he and his son had been educated in the School of Mines in Paris. My father met Mr. Henry Seybert in Paris in May 1825, shortly after his father's death. They became well acquainted and travelled together through England the following summer, accompanied by Mr. Nathaniel Chauncey of Philadelphia and Mr. Jacquelin Ambler of Virginia. On their return to Paris they spent much time together, frequently dining at pleasant restaurants and passing their evenings at the theatres, especially at the Théâtre Français, which in the winter of 1825-1826 still numbered the great Talma and Mars among its attractions.

BUT there was one place in Paris particularly attractive to these four gentlemen—the residence of Mme. de L—. She had been unfortunate in her marriage; her husband, being extravagant and wasteful in his habits, had spent not only his own fortune but a large part of that of his wife, thus making it necessary for her to receive table-boarders and lodgers. She had a small daughter, five or six years old, who was given



by my father as a romantic reason for Mr. Seybert's never having married.

MR. SEYBERT was so impressed by the wisdom of Mme. de L— in the bringing up of this child that he decided, with her consent, to have the little girl educated at his expense, his intention being that when she reached the proper age she should become his wife. When the time arrived he went to France to marry his protégée, but finding her so young and lovely and himself so old and world-worn, his conscience smote him. Instead of becoming her husband he presented the young woman with a large *dot* and returned alone to America. From that time women played no part in his life, and he interested himself in the pitiful condition of the little waifs of the streets, and also in the development of modern spiritualism. On his death in 1883 he left more than a million dollars to further both causes.

ANOTHER good deed done by Mr. Seybert and assisted by my father was the bringing of a French or Swiss baker to Philadelphia, I should think about 1850. The bread from the bakeries at that time they thought impossible, so they sent to Paris for a well-recommended baker and his wife. He came and acquired a large patronage, but gossip began. The baker was reported as beating his wife, and when Mr. Seybert inquired into this and found the report true, he sent for another baker from Paris, and persuaded the customers of Baker No. 1 to give their custom to

Baker No. 2. No. 2's descendant, after all these years, is still supposed to be the champion baker of Philadelphia—Jules Junker.

BEING so much younger than the rest of my family and little considered in the household, I never felt I was part of them, but looked upon them as an outsider might have done. They were to me a group of interesting and exciting people. I admired them all and wished I could be like them, and a credit to this distinguished, clever and handsome family, for I was given plainly to understand—though not meant unkindly—that in appearance and brains I was an inferior article. For some reason this opinion was so ground in, that it did not seem to hurt or trouble me. I had no “inferiority complex” and if at times any hurt feeling, it was pity for them that I failed to measure up to the high standard set by my parents and the older children. Whether from coming so late in my parents' lives, or perhaps from the natural exhaustion of bringing up and educating so many sons and daughters, no thought was given to my mental development,—I was just allowed to grow up. Though at nine years old I was sent to the best school of the day, Miss Agnes Irwin's, whether I knew my lessons or not seemed to be no one's affair, and of course I never knew them.

At the age of thirteen I was taken from the school to be tutored by a daughter of an old French friend of my father's who was very poor and needed work.

As I remember, Miss Picot, who had no talent for teaching a child, would sit at a desk in the dining-room, and I would spend the mornings on the stairs outside, enjoying the conversation of the passers-by, unless Father's door would open when I would rush into the dining-room. After a year, perhaps two, this method of educating me did not seem satisfactory even to my family, and so I was returned to Miss Irwin's for special classes, and on leaving school prepared to enter the gay world, I did know a little English history, had read Scott's novels and the *Idylls of the King*, and had committed to memory some other of Tennyson's poems.

I FEAR I did not appreciate them until somewhat later. I was riding with my first really grown-up admirer—a left-over from my older sister—when, leaning far over from his saddle, his hand on mine, he quoted that rather charming bit from *Sir Launcelot and Queen Guinevere*:

*As fast she fled thro' sun and shade,  
The happy winds upon her play'd,  
Blowing the ringlet from the braid:  
She look'd so lovely, as she sway'd  
The rein with dainty finger-tips,  
A man had given all other bliss,  
And all his worldly worth for this,  
To waste his whole heart in one kiss  
Upon her perfect lips.*

For the first time I realized that Tennyson's poems were worth the knowledge, and that life was very like the Duchess's romantic novels.



THE Philadelphia of 1837, where my mother came as a bride, must have been attractive to look at and interesting socially, but even in my day the red brick houses, white marble steps and green shutters had a charm of their own. Most of the houses had gardens at the back that in the spring were filled with flowers; lovely June rosebushes against the fences, smaller flowers in the borders, a large grass plot in the center with some flowering bush—ours a very large *Spiræa Japonica*.

OPPOSITE the back of our garden was a much larger and more beautiful one belonging to General Robert Patterson. He was an Irishman who had come to this country when quite young. In 1834 he bought from John Hare Powell a property at Juniper and Locust Streets and built a handsome Colonial house there, surrounded by a formal English garden, laid out by Mather, a noted English landscape gardener. He had conservatories for orchids, the first ever brought from Mexico and grown in the United States. Part of this lovely spot where I played as a child belongs now to the Historical Society of Philadelphia, and the rest of that beautiful garden is covered by small dwellings.

THERE were, of course, other fine houses with gardens, among them Mrs. Joshua Lippincott's at Broad and Walnut, Mrs. Edgar Thompson's at Eighteenth and Spruce, later belonging to the George McFaddens, and the Burt house built in 1834 at

Twelfth and Walnut, with its wonderful magnolia tree.

PEOPLE in those days did not go to the country earlier than the end of June or even mid-July, country air before that date or after the fifteenth of September being thought unhealthy. The town houses were put in summer order with straw mattings on the floors, striped linen covers—very fresh and clean—on the furniture, and the shutters bowed during the heat of the day to keep the sun out. During the long spring and early summer evenings, it was the custom for families and friends to sit on the front door steps, and a pretty sight it must have been with the young girls in their fresh muslin dresses. The evenings often ended in a visit to a nearby confectioner for saucers of Philadelphia's much praised ice-cream. Perhaps in addition, some lady-fingers or a *Queen Cake* added to the feast.

A BLOCK from my father's house was the shop of E. Milton Dexter, the originator of Philadelphia's *White Mountain Cake*. The Dexter of that day was a handsome young man, but being a shop-keeper, my mother would severely reprove her daughters and their friends for remarking his appearance: "A lady should take no notice of the looks of a person in that class." Some years ago I was at Dexter's when the former young man, then an old one and still very handsome, walked in. I had not seen him in years. I spoke to him and told him I was Moncure

Robinson's daughter. He thanked me most courteously for recalling myself to him and looking at me very intently said, "Let me see, which one can you be? No, not Mrs. Chauncey, you are not tall enough. Oh, I know. You are the little fat one."

AMONG other early recollections I remember the horse-cars on the city streets, with straw on the floors in winter to keep us warm, and the struggles of the two horses on icy, wintry days to start the car; with sometimes a third added to help them pull, and passers-by helping to push. In 1892 there was an agitation for electric trolleys, and a mass-meeting was held at the Academy of Music to discuss the certain ruination of the city, and the killing of many citizens, particularly children, which would result from such a change.

As a child I had no companions, although occasionally during the winter I would be taken by my nurse to have supper with the child or grandchild of some friend of Father's. I remember going to Mr. Eli K. Price's to take supper with his granddaughter; to the beautiful Mrs. Philip Connor's to play with her daughter; and to Mr. William Henry Rawle's to visit his youngest child, Edith. His eldest daughter, Minnie, later Mrs. Cadwalader Jones of New York, I remember made my playtime with her sister very gay and delightful. In after years Mrs. Jones became a brilliant and charming hostess. It was a real privilege to be asked to her old-fashioned house on



Eleventh Street in New York for her early Sunday dinner, to partake of the roast beef, a reminiscence of the Philadelphia Sunday meal of her youth, and to meet and listen to the agreeable talk.

THEN there were the children's parties, with always an orange to carry home, and the kissing games,—*Copenhagen*, and *Clap In and Clap Out*—an odd amusement for the children of those Victorian days. I was not a success at these games. I was fat and shy, and no older boy seemed to fancy me. How often on my return home I would pray that I would grow up thin and that the big boys would kiss me.

DURING the summer, however, I had a companion, for in the country there always seemed to be a little Lizzie, a kitchen-maid who, when not preparing vegetables or doing other chores for the cook, would be allowed to play with me. This did not satisfy my mother, and so when at Miss Irwin's School I made the acquaintance of Caroline Lewis, the problem was solved, and from that time on Caroline and I were always together. What a happy recollection it is! Carrie, as she was called, was as thin and small and lively as I was fat and large and stolid. Up to this time I had never been allowed to go out on the street alone, but for some reason small Carrie seemed to inspire my mother with confidence, and with the promise from her that she would hold my hand crossing Broad Street to be sure to keep me from being run over, we were allowed to go our way, no nurse in attendance.

What a change from my restricted life, and what fun we had!

AMONG other things, such as climbing trees, etc., Carrie taught me the wonderful game of paper-dolls, and many of our afternoons and evenings were spent in making up stories for our dolls to play out. Such romantic stories, and such beautiful clothes as we made for them, or rather as Carrie did. Indeed she often made the dolls as well as the clothes. I, with my clumsy fingers, fell far short of her efforts. I was often dissatisfied and jealous of her ability, but I enjoyed the entrancing game.

As Carrie and I grew older our games with paper-dolls—and remember this was the age of the Duchess' and Rhoda Broughton's novels—became more romantic and exciting, but what made paper-dolls seem tame was my sister Fanny's engagement and marriage to Sydney Biddle.

THE winter before she was married she and I went down to Atlantic City for a few days, and even in the far off year of 1879, *The Brighton* was the place to stay. I wrote some rather amusing letters to Carrie, in one of which I said, "We have down here a very pretty and very ordinary Miss W. and her sister from New York, who sit at our table. She does not know who we are, as last night she commenced discussing the New York men, how bow-legged they were. She first said how bow-legged Willy Jay was,—imagine a Jay

being called without a *Mister!* Then she said at least Charlie Robinson said so, but Charlie Robinson needn't talk, for he is more bow-legged than any. Imagine this, we who pride ourselves on Charlie's figure and whose legs are as straight as mine—we both felt much more humble when we left the table."

FANNY was married on the hottest June 28th that ever came my way, and it was the great event of my life, for of course I was a bridesmaid. Miss Agnes Irwin said of the wedding, "The Biddles were there in plenty and the Robinsons in great beauty."

THE same Carrie who was as good at rhyming as she was at paper-dolls wrote the following:

#### THE WEDDING

*Come list ye lords and ladies gay  
Unto this song of mine,  
How on the twenty-eighth of June  
Eighteen se-ven-ty-nine,  
Was married in the Church St. Mark's  
The very fairest maid  
That ever had a father's love  
And amply it repaid.*

*I sing of Frances Robinson,  
The fairest of the fair,  
There's not a maiden in the land  
That can with her compare,  
The red that comes upon her cheek  
Is like the damask rose,  
And like a petal dipped in air  
Her saucy little nose.*



## A VIRGINIA GENTLEMAN

*She wore a dress of samite white  
With feathery fall of lace,  
Her veil, with orange blossoms caught,  
Fell o'er her drooping face;  
And bridesmaids eight did follow her,  
All of her dearest friends,  
And at the thought of losing her  
Each heart with anguish rends.*

*The groom, he was a goodly man,  
At least, so thought the bride,  
His head was high and in his eye  
A look of gentle pride.  
His brother stood at his right hand,  
A noble youth was he,  
And on this point the bridesmaids  
Did one and all agree.*

*Now the organ's playing softly,  
Its notes first low then loud,  
'Till they reach the vaulted ceiling  
And a hush falls o'er the crowd;  
And now the doors are opened  
And the congregation view  
First four ushers walking slowly  
Then eight bridesmaids, two by two.*

*And last of all comes Frances,  
The fairest of the fair,  
She leans upon her father's arm,  
I trow a noble pair.*

*Now the organ's playing softly  
For the Service's begun  
Now the music surges upward  
For the Ser-vi-ce is done.  
And the ring that's on her white fin-ger,  
The first one from the middle,  
Has changed Miss Frances Robinson  
To Mrs. Sydney Biddle.*

*Here's to Mrs. Sydney Biddle,  
And may she never feel  
Any upside down sensation  
From a turn of Fortune's wheel.  
And may her feet on Life's rough road  
With stones be never worn,  
And may she pluck the rose of life  
And never feel the thorn.*

AFTER Sydney's and Fanny's return from a short wedding trip they were to go to Europe for three months. It had been decided by my father that I should go with them, and—as he expressed it—the following winter be presented to society. Of course Fanny's beauty, and particularly her brains, had been worthy of a trip with Miss Irwin, mine were not so considered. But Father was a fair person and felt it was not right to give one daughter a European experience and not the other. So this trip salved his conscience, and though I would be young to be brought out in society, it was too good an opportunity to lose, particularly as the family after much discussion, of course before me, had decided that if I grew any fatter, and likely I would, I should have small chance of any attention. As Charlie Robinson pessimistically said, "A real lover always began with the hand and there seemed little chance of my large ones having such an experience."

AT any rate, from every point of view, the sooner my début the better, and Fanny could buy my coming-out clothes in Paris. No one seemed to think what a bore I should be to the poor bride and groom. On

July 9th, 1879, we sailed, and oh, how sea-sick and home-sick I was. Although my two companions were very kind, they must have found me a trial, for they were very much in love and wanted each other—not me. Alas, poor, ignorant me, their talk was so far over my head, for I could hardly spell, much less know about the intellectual things they talked of. Nor did I care to know. It was not until years later that my ignorance appalled me.

BUT they bore with me, and Fanny, who was a woman of character and determination, knew her duty. Even if she couldn't educate me in three months, by fair means or foul she would get me thin. Her first step was to take away my spending money so that I could buy nothing to eat that she didn't know about. Never will I forget my hungry days in Canterbury. Fanny was ailing and in bed, Sydney in London, and, lonely and hungry, I roamed alone about the streets, not looking at the Cathedral nor thinking of Chaucer, but gazing with famished eyes and empty stomach at every bakery window, longing for a sweet bun.

FANNY was successful, however. When I returned home I was much thinner, and the following winter, owing to a walking admirer who took me ten miles of an afternoon, and another who danced me in the evening, I acquired an eighteen inch waist. This was not quite unaided by outside help, for Wilkins, my mother's maid, would pull the lacings of my heavily



boned corset and also of my frock as tight as she could, and then take the button-hook to bring them together.

I WROTE long letters to Carrie while I was abroad, which show how young and unsophisticated I was, but they are rather amusing. From London, I wrote:

July 24TH, 1879.

. . . If you were only here how you would love it. We are on the go the whole time, and there is so much to see that is nice. If you could only see Westminster Abbey I think you would go crazy, it is so wonderfully beautiful with all its tombs. . . . Then the people, the women—you can't imagine how badly they dress,—the men are perfect. . . . Tonight we are going to hear Patti sing at the opera, and as it is her benefit there will be, I imagine, a great crowd and we will see all the swells. If you could only see the footmen's legs and powdered heads you would die, they are so perfect. On Sunday I went to Hyde Park and I saw the Princess of Wales. She is very pretty. When you go to the Farm, see that Lambkin has not too much meat and that he has his bath every day. Ask Mother to make Moncure dig out the sheep hole for Lambkin to bathe in.

I HAVE another painful recollection of my European trip. It was decided by Fanny and Sydney that I should be taken to spend the day at Richmond and Kew Gardens. Suddenly at the station a button gave way and I knew—horror—that it must be a panty button. I whispered my trouble to Fanny. Could she say to Sydney that I must go somewhere to pin my petticoat? Mid-Victorian Fanny said impossible, she could not mention such a thing. "Alas," I said, "What

can I do?" With an evil look on her face she said, "Hold on to them," and so I did. I wrote Carrie:

Grasping firmly with both hands the pockets of my dress, and trying to hold them up without Sydney Biddle seeing that my dress was very short—but in vain, for slip, slip they came, but with one brave attempt I lagged behind to view a rose and with one violent grasp I fastened my garters over the ends of *that garment*, and thank the Lord, though I wore out the fingers of my gloves in my heroic efforts to save my reputation, they kept up until I got home.

BUT on our return to our lodgings in Half Moon Street, my poor fat fingers were swollen and bleeding!

I WROTE from Paris—

Caroline, we have been shopping. You know my love for dress. Well, dearest, I would rather live in my chemise and panties for the rest of my days than ever get a single stitch in Paris,—for of all the troublesome places to get clothes, Paris is the most so. Yesterday we went to Worth's and after Fanny had tried to impress on their minds I was young but of unnatural growth, so to make my dresses simple, we decided on two, one white and the other light blue. I have just returned from trying them on. I have tried to look small but impossible. The woman who was fitting me turned to me and said, "*Mademoiselle est très grande*," giving my poor waist such a squeeze. This was more than flesh could stand, so with a mighty effort I took a long breath and then let it out, and with my last gasp said, "*Trop petite, petite*." The woman was completely smashed and loosened my dress so quickly that she burst the seam!

We went to the Français to see Sarah Bernhardt in *Hernani*, and it was the most wonderful thing I have seen.

SHORTLY after this we sailed for home, and how happy I was to reach my father's farm at Penllyn. No more sight-seeing, but wandering over the place with my dear old dog, Lambkin, a huge, black and white woolly animal, part mastiff and part Newfoundland. Why *Lambkin* I do not know, for he was a fighter by instinct, although an adorer and protector of his young mistress. Indeed, such a protector that one afternoon, while walking with him and Wilkins on the road, a young neighbor met me, and Lambkin—no doubt with the best intentions—took the entire seat out of the gentleman's trousers. It is needless to say that no other young man ever joined me when Lambkin was about.

ANOTHER friend had come into my life during the schooldays at Miss Irwin's, Marion Lea, the youngest of five handsome and talented daughters of Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Lea of Philadelphia. The eldest, Anna, an artist, had married Mr. Merritt, an Englishman, and was living in London. The Lea family had spent much time in Europe, which resulted in their knowledge of languages, music and art, Mrs. Lea giving great thought to their education, their manners and their voices; there was no Philadelphia twang in the latter.

WHEN I first met Marion her family had but shortly returned from Europe, and owing to the several unmarried and charming daughters, their house was a very agreeable one. My brother Charlie certainly



found it so, and was most enthusiastic over his evenings spent there, where one daughter was a fine pianist, another sang delightfully and a third was so pretty. Marion, then about ten years old, was still in the nursery.

As time went on she and I were much together, entering society the same year. How attractive she was, and how lovely in appearance. She also sang, and after a year or two in the gay world, she decided it would be well for her to go to London and have her voice trained, hoping to sing in opera. She could live with her sister, Mrs. Merritt, now a widow. The latter's house on Tite Street during the eighties was a center for a very brilliant group of artists, actors, poets and musicians.

AFTER studying a year or more, her singing master, Garcia, whose father had been the teacher of Jenny Lind, thought Marion's voice, though a colorful, dramatic soprano, had not volume enough; but realizing her latent dramatic talent, he suggested that she see the actress, Mrs. Kendall. After trying, but successful, interviews, she was offered the part of *Audrey* in their coming presentation of *As You Like It*. Marion made such a success of the part that the superb old actress of the past, Mrs. Fanny Kemble, said she was the greatest *Audrey* she had ever seen.

FROM then on her stage life began and a brilliant career was predicted for her by such theatrical critics

as Henry James, Bernard Shaw, William Archer and Sir Edmund Gosse. After leaving the Kendalls, thinking it was the best training, she joined a stock company travelling through the Provinces and was with them for three years, Stephen Phillips being one of the cast. At the end of that time, feeling she had had enough experience for London, though warned that after such a long absence it would be impossible for her to be successful, she determined to go there.

HEARING of a manager looking for someone to play a Russian adventuress, she dressed herself as one and came to beg for the part. With all the airs and strong accent of a continental villainess, after making appropriate conversation for some moments, she rose to her feet and casually tossing off her large velvet hat and a dashing cape, came forward as herself, saying, "I hope you think I'll do for the part." The manager had the grace to take her, so she achieved the impossible.

SOME few years later, in 1889, *The Doll's House*, the first play of Ibsen's to be given in England, was put on the stage of a small theater in London, with Janet Achurch taking the part of *Nora*. Marion Lea and her friend, Elizabeth Robins, also an American actress, went together to see it. They were so impressed by Ibsen's knowledge of life that after much discouragement, finding no manager willing to put on *Hedda Gabler*, they ventured doing it themselves.

As Marion expressed it in a letter written to me years later:

We certainly had the most fantastic fun putting *Hedda Gabler* on the stage, and it is perfectly true that we did it with a few gold nuggets of Elizabeth Robins' and my diamond bracelet as all our assets. These, converted into cash, would have paid our way for a week, so we felt justified in doing it, and the result was a triumph which no one could guess who had *not* known what the stage was then and there, for this era of the late eighties and early nineties was the powerful and arrogant London of Queen Victoria, and the English theater at its zenith.

To quote from a lecture given by Elizabeth Robins before the Royal Society of Arts in 1928 on *Ibsen and the Actress*, she says of Marion Lea:

Marion Lea, again the initiator, urged me to join her in producing *Hedda Gabler*. . . . *There* was an actress (I cannot but think), after Ibsen's own heart!—skilled, eager, highly sensitive. Above all, her own striking originality did not stand in the way of complete loyalty to her author. She already had a singularly keen appreciation of the aims and ends of good stage-management. . . . Perhaps more than anyone I ever worked with, Marion Lea had the sense of playing with the whole orchestra. Yet she had a perception of character so independent, clean-cut, daring, that people who had seen her success in Shakespearean comedy hardly recognized her when she came on, for instance, as *Thea*. And make-up had very little to do with this genius for individualising. Her performance of *Thea* was a triumph of art; but so unforced, so true to life, that people wouldn't believe she was acting at all. . . . One of the few who did not fall into this error was Mr. Bernard Shaw.



SHORTLY after this she married the dramatist, Langdon Mitchell, and returned to America. Langdon was the youngest son of Dr. S. Weir Mitchell of Philadelphia, and when Oliver Hereford heard of the engagement, he wrote his congratulations to Dr. Mitchell and stated that as far as he knew "actresses sometimes occurred in the best regulated families."

THE first meeting of Marion Lea and her future husband had been at a children's *Macbeth* party held at the home of Dr. Horace Howard Furness, the Shakespearean scholar; Marion, then about ten, taking the part of *Lady Macbeth*, and Langdon that of one of the *grooms* in the play. A little later they belonged to the same children's dancing class—he with hair on end, sitting sulking in the corner, longing to get away.

LANGDON MITCHELL, owing to the early death of his mother, was brought up largely in the home of a loving and beloved grandmother. Perhaps owing to this and her spoiling, he was always a violent little boy and later an obstreperous scholar at St. Paul's School. He threw whole boxes of cartridges in the school stove; he set twenty-five wooden forms on end and tipped them over so that thunder filled the building; and he finally locked Dr. Henry Coit and the Faculty in the Headmaster's upstairs study, whence they were extricated through the window with step-ladders.

THIS last straw got his well-earned expulsion, and his father sent him to Europe to finish his education. His tutor there was Cecil Spring Rice, later the British Ambassador in Washington. On returning from exile after four years, a rebel no longer, he studied law at Harvard and Columbia, but before doing so asked his father whether, if he graduated among the first ten, he would have his permission to write. Dr. Mitchell felt it was quite safe to promise this to so careless a student, but Langdon graduated well up among the first ten, was admitted to the New York Bar and entered the office of the lawyer John Cadwalader of New York.

SOON, however, he gave up the law for a literary career. As the result, he wrote two volumes of poetry, a book of essays and many plays, two among them best sellers—*Becky Sharp*, and *The New York Idea*,—this latter considered by many students of the drama as the finest example of the nineteenth century comedy of manners.

IN 1890, two years after *The Players* was founded, he was elected a member, and at its eighth annual revival, his play of *Becky Sharp* was given. While tradition was cast aside in selecting a play by an American and living playwright, the choice was justified. The gross receipts from the play were the largest of any of *The Players'* revivals, and the artistic success a matter of club and theatrical history.

LATER Langdon published a book of essays called, *Understanding America*. Though a constant critic of his own country, he had for it an unextinguishable love and affection.

PERHAPS his most successful and brilliant achievement was a series of lectures delivered for four years at the George Washington University in Washington on poetry, the drama and literature in general. The lectures began with a small and not very important class in literature, but their fame spread and his audience increased at such a pace that he was soon forced to move his class to larger quarters, where the modest and astonished nucleus was joined by an ever-increasing number of senators, diplomats, scholars, lawyers and men of the world. Later he filled for two years the position of Mask and Wig Professor of Drama at the University of Pennsylvania.

LANGDON was always athletic and as a school boy was captain of the football team at St. Paul's. This love of exercise went hand in hand with his love of letters and much of his life was spent in the open—Mexico, and the backwoods of New Brunswick and West Virginia—where friendly talks with the natives gave him keen delight. One of his friends in the wilds was a Carroll McClough who had killed seven men. On his deathbed the preacher promised him *Heaven* if he repented, *Hell* if he refused. He refused, saying there was only one of the seven he was sorry about.



FRIENDS like McClough, an out-door life and athletics in some form were a happiness until the day he went to bed for good.

His illness was a long and painful one. A short time before he died, when there seemed hope of his recovery, he wrote me from the hospital the following note:

NOVEMBER 9TH.

DEAR MRS. BOYER:

I devour them twice a day, and remember the *donor*.

I wish I could *see* you, but, let me assure you, *you* lose nothing. I am poor company.

I hope for Atlantic City soon.

Love to Harry and tell him and Francis that Amoeba Histolytica is a Bitter Bug.

Your most affectionate

LANGDON.

HE also cared greatly for young people and they for him. For several years, when he lived in Philadelphia, a number of young men friends, many years his junior, would go each week to his house to discuss and talk with him, and a delightful hour they would have. Many of the group had been his friends from their early childhood, and when the end came, with saddened hearts they followed their friend as pall bearers to his last resting place.

It is difficult to realize that this vital, brilliant gentleman has gone. I still can hear his glorious voice ring out as he read from the Bible the story of the

Prodigal Son, and will always remember how, in those happier days, the sunshine of his nature warmed us all.

A CHARMING incident recalls itself to my memory. After Marion Lea's marriage, while she was still in England, Mr. Mitchell, who was a connection of Mrs. Fanny Kemble's, naturally wished his wife to meet not only a relative but one of the greatest actresses of former days. Marion, excited and perhaps a little nervous, went by herself to call. She was ushered into a large room, and at the far end there was seated in an easy chair a small but heavy old lady, who spoke no word of greeting, but gazed steadily at her with large and brilliant eyes. Marion silently advanced and as she approached nearer, the old lady, very slowly holding out both hands, said in a deep, glorious voice the one word, "Audrey."

ON her return to America, Marion had expected to continue her profession, in her husband's plays, but alas, some years of ill health prevented her doing so, and as one of the most noted theatrical critics said to me, "Thereby the stage lost a great actress." Two or three times only she returned to it; once touring the United States with the Kendalls, and again playing in her husband's brilliant comedy *The New York Idea*, with Mrs. Fiske, Arliss and John Mason.

It was a happy day for me when my dear friend returned to this country. Since then though she has constantly moved from place to place and we see little

of each other, we are still most sympathetic and congenial. Her children, and delightful ones they are, as they grew older also became my very good friends. I always felt as if they partly belonged to me, and I fear I have sometimes tried their mother by my interference. On one occasion the eldest daughter had a rich Jewish admirer. She was working in New York and her parents, then living in Washington, had never met the man. Interfering me suggested that his record should be looked into, and that my eldest son, without knowing the reason, could do the looking. He did so and the record was more than satisfactory. I sent the report to Marion and she wrote in reply, "She has turned him down—perhaps a pity for he seems to have everything to offer but hair and a crucifix."

AND now, after this lengthy interruption I must return to the life of a *débutante*. In the eighties a young lady's entrance into society was a serious business. First there was the coming-out reception, then as soon as that was over she must be taken to call on her mother's old friends. Every fine afternoon, John the coachman, would bring the brougham to the door at three o'clock, and Mother and I, clad in afternoon costumes and white gloves, would start on our pilgrimage, in our hearts hoping that the ladies called on would be out, and cards left instead of a visit paid.

NEXT was the coming-out ball, exciting but terrifying, given in one's parents' home; for a private ball in a public place was then unheard of. The invitations



were sealed with the family crest, not posted, but delivered by a servant or a man hired for the purpose. The day of the dance, linen crash was put down on the drawing-room floors for the dancing, and Hassler's band, hidden in a corner behind tall palms and other plants, provided the music. There was a room, usually on the second floor, for those who wished to coquette more privately.

AFTER this formal introduction to society the débutante was allowed to go to the Dancing Class, where not only the waltz and polka were danced, but also the lancers, the quadrille and sometimes the Virginia Reel. She also went to small parties to which her mother was not invited, going with another girl—a maid in attendance—or with a brother if she had one.

NEVER shall I forget the horror of my first small party. For some reason, from the time I was a cowardly, fat child and had been chased out of the stable-yard by Moncure on his vicious horse, I had stood in great awe of him. I felt he despised me, and of course I longed for his good opinion. On this occasion he was my chaperon. I don't blame him for not liking the job, for I was not Fanny whom he admired greatly and was proud of. As I remember, at the beginning of the party I was stuck with the same young man for a long time. Suddenly I heard a hoarse whisper in my ear from Moncure, "If you don't have a better time in five minutes, home you go." What the reaction to this threat was I do not know, but it must have been a good one for I was not taken home.

THERE were few dinners for the young people in those days, and only occasional theater parties. Gilbert and Sullivan's operas, particularly *Pinafore*, were most popular of my first winter. Then the opera, given four or five times during the season at the Academy of Music was a great event, and for the débutante to be asked to fill a seat in a certain rich bachelor's proscenium box meant she had arrived. The host of the box always provided large bouquets for his lady guests. When sitting in an opera box there must be no stooping or lounging, the straighter the back the better.

THEN came New Year's Day. What an event! The young men in lavender kid gloves, frock coats and high hats, four or five of them together, would hire a carriage and start out at eleven o'clock to pay their respects to the various hostesses to whom they were indebted. The daughter of the house, with her mother and as many other young girls as possible, would receive these visitors, refreshing them with egg-nog and sherry—but no whiskey—and an informal lunch of croquettes and chicken salad. How these young men remained sober from eleven until six, when the calling was over, even without whiskey, I do not understand. No doubt many dropped by the wayside, for a tipsy man at a lady's house was unheard of. This long day was usually followed by a supper with champagne and dancing.

THE next event, the most important one in the

winter, and the most terrifying to the débutante, were the two Assembly Balls given at the Academy of Music. These were first held in 1748 in a warehouse fronting on the Delaware River belonging to Alexander Hamilton, and with the exception of a year or two during the Revolution and the Civil War, have continued ever since. How anxious you were until you were provided with a supper and *German* partner, who were both expected to send you a bouquet, as was also any young man who had been entertained at your parents' house, or any friend of the family. Truly a painful tax on a poor youth.

THE pride and boast of the young women were the number of bouquets, scalps would have been a better name, carried when parading around the floor on first entering the ball-room. Sometimes a belle would have twenty or thirty bunches. But before dancing, the flowers, with the exception of a few, would be given to her mother or chaperon to care for. At one Assembly, an ardent but reckless admirer sent me a large fan made of Jacqueminot roses, and I was delighted, until the Sunday newspapers published not only the name of the sender, but the price of the bouquet—one hundred dollars. My father was mortified at the vulgar notoriety, and sternly reprimanded the young man.

THE balls began at half past ten, and supper was served at twelve. The supper room was the Broad Street entrance to the Academy. There were no tables, but the pretty girls, looking lovely in their tulle



skirts and low satin bodices, sat in rows on each side of the wide steps at the two ends of the entrance hall. After supper came the Cotillion, or *German*, as it was called in Philadelphia in my day, led by handsome Edward Morrell, and oh, how happy the young woman who would open the dance with him or be chosen to lead a special figure. Next in importance was the number of times one was taken out and given favors, and it was vital to find at the end of the Cotillion that one had as many, perhaps more, than any of one's friends. The balls were over by two or three in the morning, and that was considered a very late hour. The last dance to the music of the *New Vienna* or to the even more beautiful *Blue Danube*, you kept, most sentimentally, for the one whom at the moment you thought you cared for the most.

THE last of these balls was just before Lent. No one went South in those days, but even so the social life was much quieter than it is now. There would be an evening reading class, followed by a light supper when the reading was over, and on other evenings young men would call on you in the front drawing-room while your mother sat in the back one. Tea and cake would be served at nine, or on a cold night, hot Scotch whiskey punch with lemon. In the spring the Coaching Parade took place, and later there were boating parties on the Schuylkill, with suppers of chicken and waffles at Strawberry Mansion. Afterwards you rowed back to the boat-house, and, if moonlight, and your chaperon was agreeable, you walked

home with a young man, feeling a little reckless, nervous perhaps, not sure of your parents' approval. One of them, of course, would be awake, as well as the butler or maid who opened the door for you. No young woman ever had a latch key!

ABOUT this time in the early eighties, afternoon tea drinking was making its first appearance in Philadelphia, and I was very proud and gratified when my mother gave me an afternoon tea-table, and a dozen tea-cups and saucers of various colors, bought at Briggs, the celebrated china shop in Boston. They were to be used by me alone to serve tea for my guests when they called on me near five o'clock.

FOR those who hadn't their own carriages there was a livery stable, called Ellis, which fulfilled every requirement of perfect safety and chaperonage. Even the most particular mother allowed her daughter to come home alone *with Ellis*. A little later came the hansom cab, but this was considered a little rakish, and the élite still clung to Ellis.

SKATING on the Schuylkill with a party of friends, or an afternoon drive with a young man was occasionally permitted. Of course not in a buggy—only very fast young ladies did that—but in a dog-cart with a groom, the smaller the smarter, on the back seat to play propriety; and an occasional sleigh-ride was allowed if the parents of the man were well known to your parents.

SUNDAY mornings were given over to Church, best clothes on, and after the service you took a walk up and down Walnut Street. Proud you were if a gentleman in a frock-coat and high hat met you at the church door or joined you later in the parade. Those not walking were sitting at the parlor windows, watching the passers-by. In the afternoon you always took a walk. You would have an engagement weeks ahead with a young man, and if you found him agreeable you would probably tell him that your mother would be glad if he would return for supper. You never gave the invitation as coming from yourself.

How well behaved we were, and how well behaved we were expected to be! I remember well a friend of mine—not an admirer—was at one time very distant in his manner to me. I couldn't understand why, and finally I plucked up courage to ask him how I had offended. He told me I had both surprised and shocked him. At some entertainment he had seen me sitting in the drawing-room with my knees crossed!

THE men and women of my day rarely called each other by their first names. I doubt if among my contemporaries there were five men that I addressed in that way, or they me. There was no drinking of champagne for the young girl—a glass of sherry perhaps. But even that should not be finished; it was better taste to leave a little in the glass. Green tea was often given before a ball as a stimulant. In those days



a man drunk or partly drunk at a lady's house or in a ball-room was, with few exceptions, never asked again.

AT the beginning of my first winter I had an admirer, M. we will call him, of whom I was very proud. (He was the one who had helped walk me thin.) He was much older than I, perhaps ten or fifteen years, and he was to my romantic mind a Rhoda Broughton hero, plain of face, superb of figure, and with a real past, having just recovered—I hoped I had helped the recovery—from a long and serious affair with a brilliant and attractive married woman. He was a wonderful dancer and could whisper a word in your ear that would warm your heart.

ONE spring day a coaching party to the Rabbit was given in my honor, and on the way out I sat by my host, the owner and driver of the coach. All went well until after lunch, when there was some delay before starting home. We were waiting for M, who was to sit by me on the way back. He finally appeared in a curious, damp condition. Later I learned that his head had been held under the pump to sober him, but the effect of the pump did not last long and before we reached town the driver was obliged to stop his coach and drop his passenger off. His last incoherent words as we drove away seemed to be, "Why do you take the only woman I ever loved away from me?" A few days later I received a beautifully expressed note of apology, but that was the end. He knew only too

well that he could not come to my parents' home again. Perhaps it was as well—he was a very attractive man.

THE following winter he finished himself socially. The ladies organized a subscription ball, to which, unfortunately, I did not go, as my father considered such an entertainment a modern vulgarity and would not permit my mother to subscribe. M. was there, became very drunk and unmanageable and publicly insisted that a hugely fat and middle-aged lady should sit in his lap. A nephew of the fat lady remarked, "I wish Aunt Jane had, for it would have sobered him quicker than anything else."

AN interesting event of my débutante year was a visit I paid to Mrs. Thomas Biddle of Washington to see Garfield inaugurated. The Biddle house was for many years one of the charming social centers of that delightful city, and the eldest daughter, Emily, was my sister's friend. Emily married Sidney Staunton, during the Spanish War aide to Admiral Sampson, and later Admiral himself.

FROM the moment I arrived the excitement and pleasure began. The following day, with a gay party of young people, we watched the inaugural parade from seats in a stand on Pennsylvania Avenue. Unfortunately it was raining, and what interested me most was not the outgoing and incoming presidents, but the care Mrs. Hayes and Mrs. Garfield took of their

bonnets. The open barouche in which they rode was no place for new hats, so each lady covered hers with a large white handkerchief.

I HAD a glorious two weeks in Washington; balls, receptions, dinners, and from my letters, gay flirtations enough to satisfy even a modern girl. I wrote to Caroline Lewis of one swain who had departed, "The sweet fellow sent me from Philadelphia as a good-bye, a box of flowers that has been in my imagination for many years. The size was beyond description, as big as one of my small Worth trunks, and the flowers were all the spring ones; jonquils, violets, pansies, lilies of the valley and lots of others, and of course large bunches of forget-me-nots."

BEFORE leaving home, my father had told me that I must pay a visit to his brother Conway and his family. They lived quietly in the country at their place called *The Vineyard*, some five miles from Washington, near the Soldiers' Home. I grumbled much at going, as I only knew my uncle and his eldest daughter.

THE week-end spent there proved a great contrast to the gaiety of Mrs. Biddle's, and my description of the cousins is far from flattering. I wrote again to Caroline Lewis, "I have described Leigh Robinson to you, the sedate, the learned, the clever, the pensive. Allow me now to draw a sketch of Cousin Conway—he has red hair, nothing on the tinge of auburn but



pure, unadulterated red, an angelic grin, brown eyes which he opens and shuts like a jack-in-the-box. He is a dashing brigand besides being a flirt and a lady-killer. I have no one to amuse me here, except Leigh who disapproves of me and Conway who approves of me too much."

I FELT ill at ease with them, and I feared this social butterfly would be a trying *little Visitor*. My fears were realized. On Sunday afternoon, a cousin of the Biddles, who at that time was in the Navy and stationed at Alexandria, took it into his head that it would be a pleasing joke and surprise to collect fifteen or twenty young men and ride over to *The Vineyard*.

NEVER shall I forget the horror and embarrassment of that afternoon. The Robinson family and I were seated formally around the fire in the large living-room, when from the window I saw the cavalcade arrive, some on horse-back and some in buggies. I felt I should die of shame, and that Father would hear of it and what would he say, and what would Uncle Conway and Aunt Sue think about their niece.

ON July 2nd of that year President Garfield was shot; a shock to the world. He lingered on until September, when he died, and Vice-President Arthur reigned in his stead. In manner and appearance, Arthur was every inch a president and in the social world of Washington a great asset.

THE following spring I was again the guest of the hospitable Biddles. At a stately and beautiful reception given for the President by the Secretary of State, Mr. Frelinghuysen, his handsome and distinguished daughter, then Mrs. John Davis, most courteously asked if she might present me to the President. Why didn't the earth open and swallow me up? Shyness and stage-fright took hold of my manners, and I refused the honor. To this hour I feel hot when I think of it. Eighteen years of age was no excuse, and I hope the Biddles never heard of the behavior of their ill-bred guest.

THE only other time that I was ever given the opportunity of meeting royalty—for Arthur in 1881 seemed to me the equal of any king—was after the Great War, when the King and Queen of the Belgians visited Philadelphia, and I was invited by the Mayor to meet them. His Honor was very flustered, and as he put my hand on his arm said, "I am so excited I can't remember if your name is Royer or Boyer." I enlightened him, "It is Boyer, Mr. Mayor." He escorted me to the King and the introduction was as follows: The Mayor, patting the King's arm, "King, King, this is Mrs. Boyer. Mrs. Boyer, this is the King."

FATHER'S original farm for the slaves at West Chester was burned down about 1865, and some six years later he bought the farm at Penllyn, eighteen miles from Philadelphia, where for many years our summers were spent. At that time but six or seven

families lived in the neighborhood, so that unless guests came for the night we had few visitors, as the trip from town took practically two hours. An hour must be allowed for the horse-car to reach the station at Third and Berks Streets, and another hour from there to reach Penllyn. Now the fast trains get you there in thirty-five minutes.

THE month of August, however, was always spent at some seaside resort, Bar Harbor the popular one, or Newport. But with September even Penllyn looked up. There was the three day Fair and Races at Ambler, a great event for all the neighbors, and many of them entered their horses, usually the ones that had worked their farms all summer. Some of the younger generation, like my brother Moncure and his friends, rode these versatile animals, and great was the excitement when a friend won a race.

IN the autumn, too, came the cricket matches on the Germantown or Merion Club grounds. The Newhalls—who boasted a complete cricket team in the family—George Stuart Patterson, E. Walter Clark, Alexander Van Rensselaer and others played against the visiting English or Australian cricketers, and at the end of the week's matches a ball would be held.

My first August as a young lady was spent at Newport where my parents when younger had enjoyed many summers. At this time two of their sons, Beverley, a struggling physician, and Edmund, a much



sought after, well-to-do, gay widower were there. I rather think the family counted on the latter as a step to my social success, but their count was wrong, for with the exception of one drive on Bellevue Avenue in his handsome turnout, Edmund gave me no further thought. At one of the family gatherings in the autumn his behavior was discussed, of course before me, and the general opinion was that even if he were ashamed of Nathalie he should have done something for her for Mother's sake.

As I look back I do not see why I wasn't crushed, or if not, at least compelled to make some struggle to stand up for myself and tell them that even without Edmund's assistance I did have one follower that summer. It is true that later this beau became crazy, but at the time he was sane. I imagine I was so thrilled with the importance of being Father's daughter and a member of his wonderful family that I felt I had nothing to complain of. Or perhaps it was that I was easy going, content with life and with no introspection, which protected me from getting an inferiority complex, for I was perfectly happy.

WHEN a little over eighteen I became engaged. Harry was the only son of Judge Boyer of Montgomery County and lived near Norristown, Pennsylvania. On my deciding to marry Harry he chose a rather inopportune moment to ask my father's permission. He met Father in the street and told him he wished to marry me. My father, surprised, but

liking Harry, who was always most polite to him, said by way of an answer, "Young gentleman, did you ever hear the story of the basket-maker? There was once a poor basket-maker who had a daughter, and the Prince of that land came to him to ask her hand in marriage. The basket-maker said, 'Can your Highness make a basket?' 'No,' said the Prince. 'Then,' said the basket-maker, 'When you can make a basket I will give my consent to your marriage'," and raising his hat in his grand manner my father added, "Good morning, Mr. Boyer."

TIME passed, and one day Harry came to Father and told him that he had made his basket, and Father grudgingly was obliged to give his consent to what he insisted was an understanding, not an engagement. At a family gathering he announced, "Though there must be no engagement, I feel it well to keep hold of young Boyer. He seems a worthy fellow and nothing better may offer." And this at eighteen!

So a year or two later, on a spring day, the wedding took place, no one taking much interest. The trousseau, invitations and all the arrangements were left in my ignorant hands. Charlie Robinson, being the only unmarried brother, was one of the ushers, as was also his friend Freddy Baldwin. They both sent to England for their wedding finery, consisting of beautiful coats and trousers and marvelous waistcoats. While I was dressing I had a shock. There was a loud knock at the door, and Charlie's excited voice said,





HENRY C. BOYER

From a photograph





“For God’s sake, Nathalie, can’t you do anything with Boyer? He is going to be married in patched shoes.”

I THINK my wedding dress was lovely. It was made of heavy, flowered, white crêpe de Chine, a copy of Ellen Terry’s beautiful yellow one she wore in the first scene of the *Merchant of Venice*, and for a veil Mother gave me her white point lace shawl, and I thought I put it on very nicely.

THERE were twelve bridesmaids of all ages and sizes, and an equal number of ushers preceding them up the long aisle of St. James’ Church at Twenty-second and Walnut Streets. I followed with my father, who was eighty-two and in his element, enjoying the festivity to the utmost. Every few seconds, with the blushing bride on his arm, he would stop at a pew to speak to a friend. “Mr. Thomas Biddle, delighted to see you, sir.—Mr. Ingersoll, a pleasure indeed for you to honor this occasion.” We finally reached the altar.

WHEN we returned to the house, Mother, Agnes and Fanny were nowhere to be seen. Harry seemed to have disappeared and so I received the guests alone. Anna, my brother Beverley’s wife and a dear person, felt this was all wrong and went in search of the family. She found them all lying down in a third story room, too exhausted, they said, to attend to this tiresome social duty.

THEN came the wedding breakfast. There were

many small tables about in the large dining-room and on the porch beyond, but no tables for the bridal party. Doctor Gardett, an old friend of the family, escorted me to breakfast and sat by me in the dining-room.

THE only one upset was Father, and he was sorely tried. He had kept the last of his old Madeira for this occasion, and wanted to give it to his important guests. One old gentleman, not important, drank so much of it that he was very tipsy, and in those days one's old friends were not apt to get tipsy at a daughter's wedding, and certainly not on the host's Madeira.

AFTER a short wedding trip to New York and Newport we went to live with Harry's father, Judge Boyer, near Norristown. The Judge's wife had died eighteen months before, and he was alone and seemingly anxious to have us.

MY father-in-law was not only a learned judge, but a cultivated and courageous gentleman. He had served four years in Congress, and in 1882 had become President Judge of Montgomery County, which position he filled with distinction until his death. When fairly young he had been stricken with paralysis, and although practically a cripple and not often free from pain, he seldom complained or took any bromide to alleviate it, fearing the habit would grow on him. He was very patient and kind to his son's young and inexperienced wife, allowing her without protest to





MONCURE ROBINSON

From an engraving



change his way of living and even the furniture in his house. On looking back, I fear this bride must often have tried him sorely, with her friends of another generation, her ignorance and her different point of view, and yet in the more than three years in which I lived with him he never made a criticism or said one cross word.

THE winter after our marriage the parents of one of our ushers gave a dinner in our honor. Hearing that my host was intellectual, and knowing that I would be seated on his right hand at dinner, I puzzled my brain as to how I could talk to him, how in my ignorance I could make any conversation agreeable. After much thought I decided to read a serious book in preparation for the dinner, and selected the *Life of the Reverend Sydney Smith*, whom my father had known and admired when they had been guests together at Holland House in England. How dull I found it, and how difficult to remember, but for the two weeks before the dinner I struggled through it. Imagine my disappointment when I found that my host took no interest in Sydney Smith, and my labor had been in vain.

MY first housekeeping experience began when I went to Norristown. Poor Judge Boyer! But in praise of myself I must say that I was anxious to become a good housekeeper. The market opened early, and three times a week John Kelly, the Judge's man, would knock at my bedroom door at four o'clock in



the morning, and while he harnessed the horse to a funny, high, old wagon, I hastily washed my face and dressed, and joined him at the front door, to go to the market to buy the food for the following days. Judge Boyer gave me a very liberal allowance, but the first month proved my Waterloo. Knowing nothing of the value of money, at the end of two weeks all of it was gone. The realization of this was dreadful. I locked the door of my room and wept bitterly. What was I to do? Tell Judge Boyer? Never. Harry? No. Suicide crossed my mind. Happily the vision of Mother also crossed it, and her gift of a monthly railroad ticket, and by train to Philadelphia I hurried. My dear old lady, with her tender understanding for those in trouble, gave me good advice and better still, reimbursed the money I had so rashly spent.

THIS was my first lesson in economy but not my last. I had been brought up with no knowledge of money; if I wanted material for a frock it was charged, if I wanted spending money I put my hand in Mother's red money-box in her wardrobe and took out a handful. Even now as an old woman, I fear the lesson is still unlearned.

IN good time my eldest son was born, and the small person had a hard time getting into this troublesome world. I left his naming to his Grandfather Boyer, who not caring for his own name of Benjamin Markley, called his grandson for his own father, Philip Boyer, who had been a general in the War of



MONCURE ROBINSON WITH PHILIP BOYER

From a photograph







1812. It may have been that not knowing much about babies I expected a yellow-haired doll from Schwartz, but Philip was the very longest and ugliest twelve and a half pound infant that ever met the eye of nurse or doctor, and for many months he remained so. I was reminded later by an old lady that I had once said to her, "If only some one would say my baby was pretty!" Later in appearance he fully redeemed himself.

THE nurse who took charge of him for the first five years of his life was a witty, devoted Scotchwoman who had been my mother's parlor-maid, and who when I married came to me. Afterwards she herself married and left us, but that made no difference in our friendship, and until her death in 1935, Sarah McLaren was my loyal and devoted friend.

FOR seven years we spent August at Marion, Massachusetts. During the eighties and early nineties there were many delightful people at that simple little place on Buzzard's Bay. They lived in the fishermen's cottages, for there were few private houses and only one hotel, the *Sippican*. The Watson Gilders, he the editor of the *Century Magazine*, had their own house and studio, and the gatherings there were unique. The summer visitors included President Cleveland and his wife, John Hay, Howells the novelist, Greeley the explorer, Modjeska the actress, the lovable Clark Davises with their handsome and talented son Richard Harding Davis, Dana Gibson, Joe Jefferson the creator of *Rip Van Winkle* and *Bob Acres*, handsome old

James DeKay in his red flannel shirt, and Mrs. Gillespie, Franklin's granddaughter. It was she who was largely responsible for the Philadelphia Centennial of 1876, and for bringing music to Philadelphia in the person of Theodore Thomas, the leader of our first fine orchestra. (She also taught me to make button-holes.) The following is a delightful letter from her:

250 SOUTH 21ST STREET.

MY DEAREST NATHALIE:

What must you think of me? I am covered with shame when I remember (as I did the moment you left me yesterday) that while I discanted on the usefulness and beauty of Fanny's gift to me on my birthday, I *said not one word* to you of yours! I thought you had a quizzical look on your face two or three times as we went on our way together, but never dreamed that it was my outrageous neglect that brought it there.

Not one note of pleasure or approval came from me about the *Nightingale* which is so lovely.

It may comfort you to know that I was too late for the Bank!

I should have gone to you early to-day to ask pardon but I was to lunch with Mrs. Van Rensselaer and I was afraid of being tired. This afternoon I went to see Mrs. Caspar Wistar who has had a sorrow, and walked up from there to stop at your house to make my humble confession of forgetfulness which alas! belongs to 80 in the shade. It was quite dark and I was afraid to stop, lest you should think I could not reach home alone. That is the truth, dear, and until you tell me with your own lips I am forgiven I shall not be quite content.

You will soon see

Always your loving friend

E. D. GILLESPIE.

*Do not write.*

LUXURY-LOVING Mrs. Gillespie had suffered from poverty all her life, and a few years before she died some friends arranged an annuity for her. Soon after, I met her on the street and congratulated her, and asked her what was the first thing she meant to do with it. "I've done it," she cried, and waved a package at me—a package of the most expensive French soap.

THERE was much good talk at the Gilders' studio, with every one in high spirits and all willing to do their part to make the evening gayer. Mrs. Gillespie, eighty years of age, would sing her famous song, *Boo for John*, or dance a hornpipe with Joseph Jefferson. Superb Modjeska would repeat the alphabet in Polish, first so touchingly that tears would fall from your eyes, and then again in so rollicking a manner that you found yourself laughing hysterically. Dana Gibson would give a graphic and absurd description of the Irish women climbing up the side of the steamer anchored at Queenstown to sell their laces. There were often violent discussions of the books of the day, the most intense being on the superiority of Mrs. DeLand's *John Ward, Preacher*, over Mrs. Humphrey Ward's *Robert Elsmere*.

THOSE were happy summers and such simple ones. Our days were spent in swimming and sailing in small catboats, and though going around Bird's Island on a rough day was a bad half hour for a poor sailor, one was young and the sail worth it.



ONCE on Marigold Day, a local holiday with much merry-making ashore, Mr. Cleveland wished to go blue-fishing. No skipper could be found who was willing to leave the land frolic to take him, so my husband offered his services and was gladly accepted. A friend, Trueman Hemingway, went along to help sail the boat. Finally they reached Bird's Island, at the mouth of the harbor, where the fishing was so fine and Mr. Cleveland and Harry getting so many bites that the latter forgot to pay attention to the navigation. Suddenly the boat began bumping on the rocks, and he rushed for the tiller. Mr. Cleveland, quite a bit startled, called out, "See here, what does this mean?" Harry, pretending to be calm replied, "Oh, it is all right, sir." "No, young man," said Cleveland, "It is all wrong." Harry, however, quickly worked the boat off the rocks without damage, but Cleveland did not forget the incident, and for a year or two would seriously refer to it whenever he met Harry.

ON their return to shore the news soon spread that "Boyer had gotten the President on the rocks," and Watson Gilder rushed to our cottage in great excitement and implored Harry to promise never to take Cleveland out again unless Captain Hathaway, an old and experienced whaler, went along as sailing master, for surely he must realize it was a terrible responsibility, taking the President of the United States out sailing as he had done, with a good chance of drowning him.



HENRY C. BOYER  
Enlarged from a tintype





A YEAR or so after my marriage, my dear friend Carrie Lewis, of paper-doll fame, went to Europe for a year or more, and Mother wrote her such a sweet letter when she sailed that I cannot help but quote it:

SUNDAY, JUNE 2ND.

The few tears shed for you, dear Carrie, mean a great deal. They don't always mean so much, for they come easily to my eyes, but it gives me much pain to part with you. At my age one year is a long time, and you have been so much one of my children for so many years (and a most agreeable sweet child), that if I did not feel your absence, it would be an evidence that I had very little heart.

You have the prospect of having a charming time and the year will pass with you most quickly. God bless you dear child.

With much love,

CHARLOTTE R. ROBINSON.

WHILE she was abroad I wrote her voluminously, of course, describing gay dinners Harry and I went to, and discussing with more or less charity our mutual friends. Among other pleasures, I spoke of a trip to New York which we made with two very charming friends, Mr. and Mrs. William Platt. She was and is not only a witty and delightful companion but, a very high bred and distinguished lady. Someone once said of her that she had the mind of a man and all the charm of a woman. I wrote the following:

Harry and the Platts and myself had such a perfect day last Tuesday. We went over to see the French collection of pictures and the Barye animals. I believe it

was a larger collection of Millets than have been since his death in 1875. Then there were beauties by Corot, two charmers by Daubigné, the most delightful cows and water and dogs by Tryon, and many others. I have seen so little since I cared for things that it comes with double delight, and the memory of the few paintings that I cared for the other day will always be a lasting pleasure. The Angelus was of course the great thing in the exhibition, and though very beautiful there were one or two Millets I cared for more; the sheep being driven into the sheepfold at night was one. It was all a pleasure. I did not look well at the Barye collection though I know three of his well. Harry found at Earls last Christmas three little casts from his bronzes and bought them to give to B— without knowing until sometime after that they were by a great artist. We were very proud when we discovered from an article in the Century our good taste. . . . After we saw the pictures we lunched at Delmonico; went to Arnold's where I bought a Mackintosh Ulster for \$16.00, and went to Mrs. Hemingway's to tea.

JUDGE BOYER died three and a half years after my marriage, and Harry, Philip and I came to Philadelphia to spend the winter with my parents. Father and Mother seemed much older, and she so lonely in the big house that we stayed with them until they both died some nine or ten years later. In that hectic household, with my brothers and sisters always dropping in unexpectedly with their friends for any meal or to spend the night, grandchildren coming to convalesce after an illness, or to be taken care of if their parents were away, or to be introduced to society, nursing to be done if Mother was ill—Father fortunately seemed to stay well—another small son, Francis,



CHARLOTTE TAYLOR ROBINSON  
From a photograph





to be cared for, and twelve or thirteen servants always quarrelling, my intellectual growth remained at a standstill, but my education as a housekeeper, accountant, nurse, and amuser of small children was well developed, and I was too busy to be ashamed of my ignorance or to know how tired I was.

SUCH a household as I took charge of. There was Bennett, Father's valet; Annie Thomas, the black, hairless laundress; a kitchen-maid; house-maids; John the coachman; and of course Philip's nurse, Sarah McLaren, and when Francis came, a baby's nurse for him, good to her baby but another difficult element in the household. After Sarah married there was a French governess for Philip.

THERE was also Wilkins, Mother's maid, an Englishwoman who had been with her from the time I was a child, very superior and pleased with herself. She had lived with some very rich people called Farmer at Gunesbury Hall near London, and she would tell with great pride of their white marble bath-tub. "Of course *they* valued it and only used it on rare occasions," not as Miss Fanny and I did the tin one every morning. Once she made the currant jelly, and when praised by Mother for its excellence, answered that she thanked God she wasn't "edicated" like some people she knew; meaning, I think, Father's secretary, Mrs. Shirmer.

THE latter was the widow of a Baptist minister, a

most trying character, but for some reason he found her so useful that he was unwilling to part with her. She lived in the house, too, unlike modern secretaries. Wilkins was not alone in her dislike of Mrs. Shirmer. Henrietta, Mother's black cook—the worst tempered and the best cook I ever knew—would drive her out of her kitchen with a red hot poker, and one day in the country I heard her shrill, high voice scream out, "If yo' eber comes in ma kitchen again Ah'll pull yo'r clothes off, hang yo' over de clothes line an' take de carving knife to yo' until yo' bleed, an' bleed daid."

AT Penllyn there would also be a small negro girl standing by my mother's side at the table, with a large peacock-feather flybrush, keeping the flies away. On occasions if any of the grown children put their arms on the table or took a bone in their fingers, the flybrush would be taken from the little blackie by my mother and the offender would get a gentle rap on head or shoulder.

My mother had a horror of flies, but she would also have no screens at the windows at Penllyn, fearing to keep out the air. As the kitchen was next to the dining-room, the door between was never opened, and all the food would be brought, as at Mother's old home in Elmington, by a negro girl from the kitchen through the front hall door to the dining-room. On one occasion the piercing voice of hot-tempered Henrietta was heard, "Yo' little nigger, yo', run fast wid my soufflé. If it falls Ah'll break yo' head." This



same Henrietta, and there are many tales I could tell of her, was much sought after by the neighbors after Mother's death. She finally went to one who she thought had an easy place for much lower wages. Shortly her new mistress came to me to complain of Henrietta's very bad cooking. I sent for her and asked the reason. "Do yo' fink," she said, "Dat Ah give ma good cooking for only five dollars a week?"

THERE was also Robert Lee, the farmer at Penllyn after Ben's death, a poor one and often a drunken one. He and black Henrietta were always at daggers drawn. She would accuse him to "the Madame" of bringing old vegetables and sour milk, and when Mother or I would tax him with this offense his perfect manners made forgiveness easy. This was often too much for Henrietta, and one day before Mother, she exclaimed, "Yo' Robert, when yo' try to get into Heaven yo' bowin' and scrapin' will do no good before St. Peter, as it does wif Mis' Robinson. He'll shove yo' right into the hot pit and there yo'll stay."

BUT Henrietta had the gratification of seeing the departure of Robert Lee from Penllyn. Drink at last got the best of him. He finally disappeared for a day or two, returning with a gun and threatening to shoot every one. Fat John the coachman was so frightened he hid himself under his bed. Then Robert disappeared again, and the last report of him, he was seen driving the hay wagon into Philadelphia with two

guns and a pistol and a barrel of whiskey. When he was arrested he told the police he could not imagine for what reason, as he was only going to town to be baptized.

AT the end of nine years both my parents had died, and Harry and I, with little money and two small children, the elder very delicate, went for the winter to an inexpensive boarding-house with a strange collection of people. A change indeed from the comfort and luxury of my parents' home, with its lack of all money responsibilities. At the time the adjustment was difficult. After my busy life I was fairly idle, lonely, very anxious and unhappy, but in looking back I see plainly it was the best thing that could have happened to me. I knew nothing of life, and that boarding-house surely taught me many things. On New Year's Eve, thinking of the past, I suddenly woke up. How shameful to be as ignorant and uneducated as I was—no wonder I was unhappy. I now had plenty of time, so there was no excuse. I must read not novels but intelligent books; I must see pictures; I must hear and try to appreciate music; I must struggle to be interested in the things worth while; and above all, I must learn to understand human beings, and where better than among this motley collection?

FIRST, there was my dear, peroxide-blonde, rather messy landlady, who was so kind to me and my little boys. The first startling thing I heard was from her. Speaking one day of her husband from whom she had

lately separated, she said, "Of course I minded Simpson's going off with that black-haired woman, but what gets me even more, he is boarding on Girard Street and paying fifteen dollars a week, and I would board them here for twelve."

AMONG the boarders was a large, showy man who seemed in that poor boarding-house to have ample means. The landlady was rather proud of having such a client. He occupied a large, third-story front room, she said magnificently furnished, and surprisingly he paid her promptly. But I noticed that when he would stop in the morning to talk with me in my small parlor she always managed to be there, and would never encourage my going with her to visit him in his third-story front. Later I discovered that his reputation was far from good. On occasions he had persuaded other gentlemen's wives to go off with him, and dear Mrs. Simpson was protecting me.

BUT on the first floor back there was another gentleman whom she thought of a different stamp. He had white hair and rosy cheeks, and she encouraged me to go with her to his room in the evenings when Harry was out, to play euchre. This became a pleasant diversion and lasted until the dentist's wife, who lodged on the third floor, had a small son, the dentist leaving her about the same time. The other lodgers suggested the reason for his leaving was that the baby had white hair and rosy cheeks. All I knew, I was not invited by Mrs. Simpson to play euchre any more in the first floor back.



LAST there was a most unpleasant and conceited young man, a Mr. Z. by birth a gentleman, and as he would bring me back gossip from the balls and dinners he attended, I was friendly with him instead of snubbing him as he deserved. An upholsterer who had worked for my parents since my childhood came one day to do a small job for me. He was shocked by my surroundings and most inquisitive about the other boarders. When I mentioned Mr. Z. he seemed relieved and said, "Oh, he is all right. His uncle lives in Rome and is chambermaid to the Pope."

AT this time, besides my waking up, another blessing came my way. Philip's French governess and the baby's nurse had both to be given up, and so dear Lizzie Bell came to take care of the children, and has lived with us for over forty years. A finer, nobler character I have never known, and how splendidly she brought up her special charge, Francis. Right was right, and wrong wrong. She taught him to read, to write and to do simple arithmetic, and best of all, to concentrate on his work and put his best into it. When reading to him, the books most often chosen by her were the Bible and stories of American History, and when little more than a baby, through her enthusiasms, he became a hero-worshiper. The special heroes, ones that would help him in any trouble, were—as he expressed it—"Genkle Jesus," George Washington and William Penn.

ONE morning when he was a little chap she went to

her breakfast and left him to do his arithmetic. On her return the lesson was not done, and on her inquiring the reason, Francis told her he had prayed to God to do it for him. She told him very firmly that he was not to leave his work to God, but to do it himself. He answered, "After this I certainly shall, for it plainly shows God knows nothing about arithmetic." Many years later when this same Francis, a man grown, was grumbling about life, I said, "Why, if you feel like that, do you work so hard?" With a most evil look on his face he muttered, "It's that damn Presbyterian conscience that Lizzie put in me."

IN 1898 the Spanish War came. It does not stand out very distinctly. Mr. Dooley's witty articles and the following doggerel remain in my mind:

*Dewey was the morning on the first of May,  
And Dewey was the Admiral in Manila Bay,  
And dewey were the Regent's eyes, the shade  
a tender blue,  
And do we feel discouraged? I do not think we do.*

Also the uncertainty for a few hours on July 4th about the battle of Santiago; with Francis, then four or five years old, killing imaginary Spaniards with his *Dewey Sword*; and his big brother calling him a Spanish girl-baby, hurting his patriotic feelings and infuriating him so much that in his evening prayer he asked God to take his father and mother and his dear Lizzie to Heaven, but "with Philip, dear God, do as You think best."

THIS story so delighted Dr. William White, that brilliant surgeon and agreeable man, friend of Sargent the painter, Hardy—of whom he wrote some charming articles called *In Hardy's Country*—, Sir Frederick Treves, Theodore Roosevelt, and many other important men; that he used this prayer to illustrate some point in an article he was writing.

DR. WHITE had been a friend of my brother Moncure's and had known me all my life. Once I had trouble with my nose and Harry at the same time with his hand. On the recovery of both he received a bill from Dr. White which had two items on it, one for service to the nose (A) and one to the hand (B). From the A item Harry drew a line to the bottom of the bill and said, "This was a good job, the nose is well." From the B item he drew another line and said, "This, Bill, was also a good job, the hand is well." Then he added, "You must be a damn good doctor, but then really I am no judge." Bill replied:

*You are no judge and never will be one  
Unless you study law and give up fun;  
Who knows the nose rejoices that it's well;  
You and your hand can jointly go to Hell.*

To this Harry answered:

*I am no judge and you no bard,  
And decent speech you disregard;  
A real poet does not curse  
To make a rhyme to suit his verse.  
Back to the boneyard, Bill.*



BEFORE this time we had graduated from boarding-houses, though still spending the winters in Philadelphia, either renting a furnished house or a small apartment. In May we always returned to Judge Boyer's former house, now Harry's, on the Sandy Hill Road, a mile from Norristown. In our nine years' absence the town had not improved. The lovely view from the house overlooking the Schuylkill Valley was much hurt by the chimneys and other atrocities of the new mills, one of them at night letting forth the most choking and unpleasant odors.

THE good country road passing our door was in bad shape. A trolley line had been built between Norristown and Chestnut Hill, and as trolleys were almost an unknown sight to a country horse in 1906 I was fearful of driving past them, and as my friends at Penllyn were also timid about meeting them, I had few visitors. Fortunately bicycle riding had become the vogue, so I could get about, though the fourteen miles to Penllyn and back was a long trip and seldom taken by me. What made my life even more trying was that though there was a family of very charming people whose place adjoined ours, they were not young and there were no friends for my boys.

AT the end of five summers, the Norristown house was sold and a small country place bought at Penllyn. Never was I so happy. To return to the place where I had lived for twenty years and loved so well, to be in the real country among old friends and new ones

who had come during my absence, and best of all, to have the children of my friends for my sons' companions!

EVEN before my parents' home at Penllyn had been broken up, the difficulties of getting there had been made easier by the Reading Railroad Station moving first to Ninth and Green Streets and then to Twelfth and Market. Now telephones had also come, and no longer did one have to depend on the wagons of country butchers, hucksters, fishmongers and vegetable men, nor did one have to buy the food in quantity and have it buried in an ice-house to keep it from spoiling before the time came for it to be used. In the twentieth century ice was delivered each day for the refrigerators, we could telephone the Philadelphia Market to send our order by a certain train, and our only responsibility was to tell the coachman or the man on the place to fetch it from the station.

NATURALLY my household was a much smaller one than my mother's. Instead of twelve or fourteen servants I had four, and a man to keep the place in order and do the station work.

ELECTRIC lights at that time were not installed in many country houses, and we continued to use kerosene lamps, but no more candles, as lamps were in the halls and bed- and bath-rooms. There were thirty-seven lamps in our small house! They had to be put in order every day, but they were far less trouble

to care for than the lard-oil ones which had been used at the Old Farm. They also had been cleaned every day, but in cold weather they had to be placed by the open fire or the kitchen range, to melt the lard before lighting, and the scraping of the many candles used in the dining-room, bed-rooms and halls had taken much time.

THEN again, at Norristown and the Farm there had been but one small bath-room, and with Mother's large family there was always a fight as to who would have the first bath. The guests were given tin tubs in their bed-rooms, put there while they were at dinner, and as the rooms were unlighted it was an easy matter and one that often happened for the unsuspecting guest to tumble into his bathtub. In our new home, to my intense delight, there were three bathrooms, and soon a fourth was added.

SHORTLY after the century came in, the automobile made Penllyn even more accessible. Before 1900, in the twenty-five years I had known it, there had been few changes—a few new families had come there to live; but in the twenty years after 1900 a large settlement of delightful people had gradually built beautiful homes between Fort Washington and Gwynedd Valley.

THE present Penllyn Club was the outcome of a Fourth of July celebration of perhaps thirty people meeting for some years at Mrs. Waln Vaux' at Penllyn



for lunch and cricket, the sons playing against the fathers. The entertainment grew, and finally some years later, the present club was bought and the Fourth of July festivities were held there. Tennis courts were built, polo began, later a swimming pool was added, later still another one for small children; and though strange to say it has remained a very simple club, it is a unique one. Only those living in the vicinity are allowed to belong.

I THINK Harry owned the first automobile in the neighborhood, an *Oldsmobile*. One Saturday in 1902 he arrived with it and I took my first drive. We started but we did not get far. Every time we met a horse the motor would be stopped and Harry would get out and lead the animal, jumping and snorting, past the car, the driver none too pleased. The *Oldsmobile* had no top, no windshield, no electric lamps—acetylene ones instead, which must be filled with water some hours before dark if you wished any light. It had a chain somewhere, always coming off and difficult to put on, and often we would remain immovable for an hour or more. And how the motors of that day did smoke and smell!

NOT disheartened, after a few weeks we decided to take a trip to New England. Our bags, covered with oil-cloth to keep out the dust, were tied on behind. On clear days we wore dusters, and on rainy days rubber slickers. I had many thick veils, and bonnet-pins for my hat. The roads were rough and dusty, with no

gasoline stations, so that we always carried an extra quantity in a can with us. Even in the cities few understood how to repair a motor, and Harry, who was a good mechanic, spent more time underneath the car than on the seat of it.

ON this first trip we had been on the road about a week, when, after a long day of torn-up roads and many break-downs, we found ourselves, late in the evening, on the worst road yet, almost impassable, and there we stuck. While Harry steered the car, a huge, good-natured and quite drunken Irishman helped me push it half a mile or so to smoother ground, and at midnight we reached New Haven, a haven for us indeed, for we were exhausted, hungry and dirty. But after food, baths and a night's sleep we decided we had had a grand time, and felt very like the early pioneers. For some seasons we spent our holidays in this way, though in much improved motors and on better roads.

LATER we gave up motor trips, and instead for some years went off for four or five weeks in the summer on the yacht of dear friends, Edward B. Smith and his wife, usually sailing from New York up the coast to Mt. Desert or even farther.

As a young married woman, while living with my parents and even later, I went little into society, an occasional dinner or theatre party, but never a ball, but somewhere about this time we began to be gayer,

giving dinners ourselves during the winter—and what formal, unimaginative festivities they were!

IF you could afford it—or even if you couldn't—you struggled to return the entertainments of your social friends in exactly the same manner and style in which they had been given. Everyone must have not only the same guests, but also the same kind of party, and come as near the dinner of the rich as possible. What a contrast to the simplicity of today among the young, with their real hospitality and utter disregard of form.

FIRST there was a man in livery waiting on the pavement to open the guests' carriage doors. If you had neither coachman nor chauffeur you hired one, if only the furnace man. Then what was absolutely necessary was a long strip of narrow red carpet laid down on the front steps so that on leaving their carriages the ladies would be in no danger of soiling their slippers. The difficulty of buying a red carpet stands out in my memory. I could manage the dinners financially, but that carpet was the last straw. I talked it over with Lizzie, and we decided that a great affair like a dinner party must be done properly, and I must go without some household necessity to pay for it.

AGAIN, no matter how capable your waitress and her assistant the chambermaid, it was obligatory, or so you thought, to have one of Chalk's men—Chalk being Philadelphia's smartest caterer—to open the front door for your guests, and take the leading part in



setting the table and serving the dinner. Twelve or fourteen were usually the number invited. No dinner was a real dinner-party without terrapin, champagne and hot-house grapes, and of course all the best silver, and equally of course, flowers—either American Beauty roses or calla lilies—in the center of the table. To pay off all your obligations properly four or five dinners were necessary during the winter, also one or two men's dinners for your husband, an even more serious and important occasion, for the wild ducks or grouse must not be over-done. What was pleasant in those days, and decidedly informal, was when your husband unexpectedly brought home from his club one, two or even more of his friends to dine. So your every-day dinner table was always set for four or more, and proud you were when the *pot-luck* was good and your husband pleased with you. It was, however, not so pleasant when you had an especially good dinner, raw oysters perhaps, which could not be used later, to have him telephone at the last moment that he was dining with Bill or Ned.

It was about this time that the middle-aged took violently to dancing the two-step, the fox-trot, but not—as far as I was concerned—the tango or the bunny-hug. No matter how elderly or how fat, male and female took dancing lessons. We practiced at home, alone, or with a friend or a member of the family. We danced at balls, at afternoon *dancing teas*, in fact anywhere there was a Victrola to play and a partner to

dance with. How we despised our narrow-minded contemporaries who disapproved of us.

THOUGH the golden age of music had rejoiced Europe and America during the nineties with the singing of the de Reszkes, Plançon, Eames, Calvé and other great artists, with Seidl often the leader of the orchestra, Philadelphia had shared but little in that glory. So when Hammerstein in 1908 tried to persuade the bankers and other well-to-do, conservative people in the city to assist him in building a new opera house at Broad and Poplar Streets, oddly enough, his idea was laughed at and violently opposed. We had the Academy of Music, acoustically perfect, and the Metropolitan Opera Company of New York sent its best singers over once a week during the winter. What more was wanted? Didn't Hammerstein know that Philadelphians would never cross Market Street? It would be against all tradition if they did. But he persisted, telling the objectors that he would give the kind of opera they had never heard, and he would build an opera house so brilliant that it would show off not only the jewels of the ladies, but their beauty, as they had never been shown off before. When one of the hoped-for guarantors suggested that he ask the rich Jews to finance him, their wives and daughters had jewels, too, his reply was that he could ask them but he wanted Christian jewels to shine from the boxes. Hammerstein finally overcame all objections and built his large and showy but becoming and comfortable opera house, and on June 15th when the cor-

nerstone was laid, he seemed a magician. For some years every box as well as every seat was filled with the handsomest and best dressed women Philadelphia could boast. The *Jongleur*, *Thaïs*, *Samson* and *Delilah*, *Salomé*, were among the operas produced, and singing in them were Mary Garden, Tito Ruffo, Tetrazzini, Gerville-Réache, and Renaud, greatest of them all.

THE patrons lived up to the opera. Tuesday during the season was a gala night; dinners before and suppers after the performance. Some of the smart box-holders ordered small two-horse omnibuses made by the best carriage-makers in New York to take their invited guests to and from the opera; a coachman and footman on the box. Champagne suppers were usually at the Bellevue, followed by dancing—a bit strenuous for the middle-aged, but this form of entertainment belonged more to them than to the young people. Indeed, as I look back to the early part of the century, society seemed gayest for those over forty.

ON April 15th, 1912, there seemed to be an unusual number of gay supper parties at the Bellevue. Suddenly someone came to our table and reported the unbelievable news that the new and splendid *Titanic*, on her first trip across the ocean, had run on an iceberg and been sunk, with few saved. There were not many in that large dining-room who had not relations or friends on the boat. An appalling silence fell on the happy company and, stunned, the guests departed.



DURING these gay years my eldest son, Philip, had married at twenty-two, Josephine Flagg, the daughter of Mrs. Allston Flagg of New York, later Mrs. J. Turner Atterbury, and had gone there to live. My new daughter, though very young, promised well, and after these many years she has more than fulfilled her promise. The following rhyme, called a receipt, and written of her by Theodore Roosevelt's sister, Mrs. Douglas Robinson, as a dinner card, will show, I think, that I have reason to be satisfied:

*A pint of amber slenderness  
Stirred into daily bread;  
Mix with a wealth of tenderness  
And common-sense and head:—  
Spread over all without a taint  
The snow-white tissue of a saint,  
And serve with just a touch of green,  
So fresh, so fair, this Josephine.*

IN 1913 Harry and I went abroad with a gay party of friends to motor through England, France and Holland; my first trip since I had gone with my sister and Sydney Biddle on their wedding trip. What a revelation the modern steamer was, and what a contrast between the dirty, ill-smelling boat of 1879 and the floating palace of the *Imperator* of 1913. No sea- or home-sickness for me this time, just straight pleasure and much laughter.

ALAS, this was the end of the care-free summers, for next year the Great War came. I was ill that summer and a mild rest-cure was prescribed. It was decided

that the best place for me was our country home at Penllyn, and Harry, who wished to see Italy, was to go there for a few weeks. By the time he reached the other side war had been declared and he was obliged to stay in Europe much longer than he expected. During his absence I spent a quiet summer with Francis, until the middle of August when he left for Canada to cruise with a friend whose boat was a night's journey by steamer from Quebec.

FEELING a little anxious on account of the war, I thought it would be well for Francis to have a passport for Canada, and consulted a friend, Mr. T. DeWitt Cuyler, a director of the Pennsylvania Railroad, as to its desirability. I was told most kindly and politely to stop being a foolish mother and to untie for good the apron strings from around my large young man. Francis at that time looked like a handsome German, fair hair en brosse, a good complexion, very blue eyes, some six feet tall and heavily built. In the train on his way to Canada he talked a great deal with two Englishmen, asking many questions. On reaching Quebec he wished to see as much as possible of the city during his short stay, and so he jumped from one trolley to another, seeking information from every one he met. Curiously, he had the feeling of being followed.

FINALLY early in the afternoon, when he reached the steamer with his valise, a hand was laid on his arm and he was told that he was to be taken to Army Head-

quarters. On reaching there, after being questioned, he was informed he had been arrested, suspected of being a German spy. Things for a time were going against him and a few days in prison, at the least, seemed likely. Finally, there was a last question, did he know anyone in Quebec? Luckily he had seen a Boston dentist on the steamer, who had made him a false tooth when his own had been knocked out in a sparring match at Harvard. The dentist was sent for, and while at first he failed to remember Francis, he fortunately recognized the tooth. So Francis was set free, and spent the rest of the afternoon most pleasantly with the Captain and other officers and good Canadian whiskey.

IN the autumn of 1914 the Emergency Aid was started by Mrs. J. Willis Martin, Mrs. John Groome, Mrs. Barclay Warburton and Mrs. A. J. Cassatt. The following January, when I became a member, it was running well in the basement of the old Lincoln Building at Broad and Chestnut Streets, now Wanamaker's Men's Store. At the time there was a great deal of unemployment, and the principal work of the organization was to feed, clothe and house many people until work could be found for them. This was the beginning of that magnificent organization, and after more than twenty years it is still doing, on a much larger scale, the intelligent, broadminded work begun by these splendid women in 1914.

IN 1916, there was trouble in Mexico and President



Wilson thought it wise to send troops to El Paso to guard the border. The Emergency Aid added another branch to their work, under the name of *The Citizens and Soldiers Aid*, to look after the families of the men, and I began to learn the work of Social Service.

WHEN America entered the War in 1917, the question came up as to which organization should take care of the families of the soldiers, *The Citizens and Soldiers Aid* under the Emergency Aid, or the Red Cross. This took some months to settle. But the Emergency Aid never waits for a decision when help is needed. Having some funds in hand left over from their Mexican work, Mrs. Martin and Mrs. Groome on their own initiative started the *Home Service*, and asked me to take the chairmanship. Meetings were held and discussions followed. Some thought it absurd to start a *Home Service*; the war would soon be over; no married men were to be sent to the training camps; and cold water was thrown on the project. But Mrs. Martin didn't mind cold water—I think she rather liked it—and by the end of April the work of the *Home Service* began in two rooms on Spruce Street, with one Social Service worker, one stenographer and myself.

BEFORE a month was over larger quarters were necessary, and Mrs. Campbell Harris generously gave us her fine, large house at 1607 Walnut Street. The Red Cross took the work over in the autumn, and for almost four years after that I remained as its chairman.

How every one worked and how the work grew! Before long there were thirteen district offices in different parts of the city, many heads of different departments, many Social Service workers and stenographers. At the end of 1918 there was a medical clinic for returned soldiers in the main building, and the number of the soldiers and their families ran into many thousands.

MUCH was distressing in helping these poor, bewildered souls. Few of them understood what the war was about, or why their husbands or sons and their support should be taken away from them. But few of the women, when you explained the situation, complained. They bravely bore their burden. At times, of course, particularly in the beginning, there was occasional trouble. I remember, one very hot July morning, coming into my office and seeing sitting at my desk a slight, red-haired, young woman, clad in a very elaborate, heavy, black satin dress. She was crying bitterly, and between her sobs I could only make out the words, "I want him back. I want him back." In time I quieted her, and I learned that some months before she had run away to Elkton, having bought the black satin dress for the occasion, and married the one she wanted back. As far as I could gather, he was not much good. He drank, beat her occasionally, had had no work before he was sent to camp, and was very much taken by the charms of a lady living in the same street. I told my red-haired friend that the camp life would be good for him; he could not drink, he would

no longer be tempted by the street siren, and she would have his army pay. In the meantime we would look after her and see her through her trouble, for a baby was coming. My words, however, were of little avail. More sobs, more of "I want him back." Finally, as a last hope, I said, "Suppose you had him back, and suppose you saw him with the young woman in your street. What would you do?" She suddenly drew herself up and stopped crying, her dark eyes flashed. "What would I do?" she said. "I'd lamm him and lamm him hard." Poor little red-head, she never had him back. When the baby was born they both died.

WHEN the war was over the saddest and hardest work began, and I imagine even after all these years the mentally unbalanced soldier is still a difficult problem.

AT the end of four years I gave up my work, and at first I missed the daily companionship of the many workers who had helped me so splendidly. Even now some one will stop me on the street, and recall him or herself to me, and we talk of those busy, happy days we had together.

My youngest son, Francis, who had returned from Harvard, went off to the Border with the City Troop in 1916, and was there until the following January. In April, soon after we entered the war, he with many of his friends went for training to Fort Niagara, then



France for two years. My luck was good, for both he and my eldest son, who was also in France for eight months, returned uninjured.

ON Francis' return and for ten years after, I had at last a son at home, and what gay and happy years they were, with his young men and women friends coming and going. Though much criticism has been made of the young girl after the war and even later, I found little to censure. Now, in 1937, when the worst of the lawless spirit of the war era has spent itself, I find the young woman of today in most cases a very normal, healthy creature; much more courageous, intelligent and uncomplaining—as the present depression has proved—than in my day. So the ugly phase through which the just-risen generation has passed has probably been what the race needed badly, imbued as it was with ignorance and puritanism. If I can judge from Francis' splendid, young wife, Mary Brooks Holmes, whom he married in 1930, they are unselfish and dutiful wives, good companions and wise mothers. She has been a continual joy to me with her unusual thoughtfulness and sweetness.

IN 1920 we bought the house in Philadelphia that we had lived in for six years, and the following autumn our summer home at Penllyn was sold. Though it was perhaps wise to do so, leaving there for the third time was harder than it had been twenty-five

years earlier. But living in the country all the year round seemed at that time impossible. We could not afford two homes and travel as well, which Harry longed to do, and as he was still practicing law, summer was his only time for a holiday. So for ten or twelve years, when the end of June came, we went to Europe, or to the west in our own country.

THE year our country home was sold, Philadelphia was beginning to disintegrate. Before the War, many people had country homes, either in Chestnut Hill or on the beautiful Main Line, but few lived in them all the year round. They would return to town in the late autumn to their city houses or—a few—to apartments. But after 1920 the flight from town began. When the young were married they found an all-the-year country house more economical, motors making it possible. The older members of society, finding the country agreeable until at least January, sold or closed their town houses, many going south for the remainder of the winter. So Philadelphia, once the City of Homes, is now, with its finest houses closed or rented for boarding-houses or cheap restaurants, or torn down for parking spaces, a tragic sight for those who remember the green shutters and white marble steps of their youth.

As my father once said of an elderly friend, "He has become garrulous," and this gossip of an old

woman seems to be doing the same thing, so it is time to stop. Much of my life has been happy. So happy that it has gone too swiftly, and it is hard to realize it will soon be over.

*Life! we've been long together,  
Through pleasant and through cloudy weather;  
'Tis hard to part when friends are dear;  
Perhaps 'twill cost a sigh, a tear;  
Then steal away, give little warning,  
Choose thine own time,  
Say not "Good-night" but in some brighter clime  
Bid me "Good-morning."*





















